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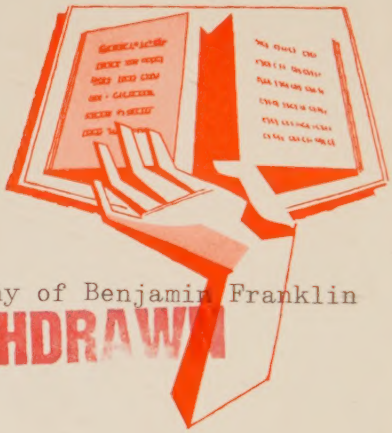

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BENJAMIN FRANKLIN 1706-1790

# The Autobiography of Benjamin Franklin

With Questions, Notes, and a Continuation of his Life

*By*

D. H. Montgomery

and an Introduction by

W. P. Trent

Illustrated by Thornton Oakley

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# INTRODUCTION

AS A RULE it may be assumed that most readers care very little about the history of books as books. They may, and often do, extend their interest from the book that has pleased them to the author who by writing it gave them pleasure; but they are usually contented with a very little information about the fortunes of the book itself, its adventures as a manuscript, the printed forms it has taken, its reception by reviewers and the public. Bibliography, in other words, is a subject which, while fascinating to the few, is but slightly attractive to the many.

Benjamin Franklin, however, was a man who in his character and his career set many rules at defiance; it is therefore not surprising to find that his *Autobiography* is an exception to the rule that books seldom have a history that can be made interesting to the majority. The story of the adventures of the *Autobiography* in manuscript and in print is almost, if not fully, as entertaining as any episode it contains. To repeat this story—it has already been pleasantly told by several biographers and editors of Franklin—is the main purpose of this Introduction; for there is, of course, no need of an introduction to Franklin the man, who is as well known as any American that ever lived, and who would have been well known even if he had not described a part of his life in his own inimitable way.

It was not until he was sixty-five years old that Franklin seems seriously to have considered the idea that it might be

desirable for him to write a consecutive account of his long, successful, important, and beneficent life. He was already very famous. From an almost penniless runaway he had raised himself, by his own thrift and energy, not merely to the position of first citizen of one of the most prosperous of the American colonies, but to the more distinguished station of a favorite and eminent citizen of the world. His electrical discoveries had made his name familiar throughout Europe. His long residence in England as the agent of Pennsylvania and other colonies had gained him many warm friends, although in the discharge of his duties he had also made enemies. Several years had gone by since he had received from the venerable universities of St. Andrews and Oxford the honorary degrees that caused him to be known as "Doctor Franklin." In a word, he had lived a life far more varied and useful than falls to the lot of most men, and he ran but slight risk of being considered vain for undertaking to describe it himself.

He did not, however, voluntarily incur even this slight risk; for he did not have the public in mind, but rather his own descendants. As a recent English editor of the *Autobiography*, Mr. William MacDonald, has pointed out, the book is all the better because it was begun "as a sort of holiday gayety, a long retrospective chat, a budget of personal and moral memoranda, written for the gratification and uses of his own folk at home."

As we see from the first page, the *Autobiography* begins as though it were a long letter to Franklin's only surviving son, Governor William Franklin, of New Jersey. It was written from Twyford in Hampshire, a village where Franklin's dear friend Jonathan Shipley, bishop of St. Asaph's, had his summer home. Only the date, 1771, is given; but as Professor

Albert H. Smyth, the accomplished editor of the latest and fullest collection of Franklin's writings, tells us, the epistle must have been begun during a visit paid by Franklin to the bishop, which lasted three weeks, and ended on August 13, as we know from a letter to Mrs. Franklin. It is not unlikely that we can point to an odd incident that happened on July 11, 1771,—just between this visit and a shorter one paid the bishop about the middle of June,—which may very well have given Franklin the determining impetus to begin his *Autobiography*.

On July 12, 1771, he wrote from London to his cousin, Samuel Franklin, of Boston, that a seller of second-hand books had sent him "a curious collection of pamphlets bound in eight volumes folio and twenty-four volumes quarto and octavo," which, on examination, proved to have been collected and annotated by the uncle Benjamin from whom Dr. Franklin got his name, and who was also the grandfather of Samuel Franklin. "Wherefore," explained Franklin, "I the more readily agreed to buy them. . . . The oddity is, that the bookseller, who could suspect nothing of any relation between me and the collector, should happen to make me the offer of them." A few weeks later, in the opening pages of the *Autobiography*, Franklin described again this strange occurrence, and it seems not extravagant to believe that such an unexpected reminder of the uncle who had already furnished him with notes relating to their ancestors should have brought at once to mind his former inquiries respecting his family, mentioned in the opening lines of the *Autobiography*, and should even have suggested the propriety of his at once beginning an account of his life for the benefit of the son who had been with him in England at the time he made those inquiries.

Franklin must have devoted himself very conscientiously to the holiday task he had undertaken, for he seems to have completed before he left Bishop Shipley's what amounts to a trifle more than the first third of the *Autobiography* as we now have it. It is sometimes said that he sent to his son what he had written, but as Governor William Franklin appears to have been with him in England in November, 1771, this is by no means certain. Professor Smyth tells us that Franklin brought the original manuscript of the *Autobiography* with him to America when he returned in 1775. He had added nothing to the first installment, because the exciting events that immediately preceded the Revolution left him little time or inclination to meditate upon the past and his own personal affairs.

When he went to France in 1776 to help secure the coöperation of that country in the war, he gave his papers, about the safety of which he was usually very careless, although he saved every scrap of writing, into the custody of his friend Joseph Galloway, of Philadelphia, who had shortly before published a plan of accommodation between the mother country and her colonies. Franklin endeavored in vain to induce his friend to declare himself in favor of the American cause; if he had foreseen that the sturdy loyalist would soon be a fugitive from Pennsylvania, he would doubtless have chosen another custodian of his manuscripts. These important documents appear to have been kept in a trunk, which was taken to Galloway's house in Bucks County and there placed in an outhouse. When Galloway, late in 1776, joined Howe's army, his estate, abandoned to the care of his wife, to quote Professor McMaster, "fell a prey to the vicissitudes of war. . . . The British raided the house, smashed the trunk, and scattered the papers of Franklin over the floor, where they lay for months."

Professor Smyth is not so certain that it was the British who committed this act of vandalism. It may have been American troops, who thought they were taking just vengeance on a traitor, when in reality they were destroying many of the most valuable of the papers relating to Franklin's life, including six out of the eight letter books that contained drafts of his correspondence while he was a colonial agent in England. They were also imperiling the existence of the *Autobiography*, although not perhaps to the extent that the quotation from Professor McMaster would imply. Professor Smyth says that Mr. Bache hurried out to the Galloway house, gathered up the loose leaves, and, restoring to the trunk all the papers he could find, brought that ill-used receptacle back to Philadelphia. Among the documents recovered, fortunately for readers in almost every land, were the twenty-three closely written pages of the original draft of the *Autobiography*. These, in some way, came into the hands of the Quaker, Abel James, an old friend of Franklin's. He was so delighted with them that he had them copied, and in 1782 sent the copy to Franklin in Paris, with the request that he would complete the narrative before it was too late.

On receiving the package from James, Franklin showed it to his English friend and editor, Benjamin Vaughan, the political economist, who was in Paris unofficially, laboring in behalf of the treaty of peace between Great Britain and the United States. On January 31, 1783, Vaughan wrote Franklin a long letter, beseeching him to finish a work which would "be worth all Plutarch's *Lives* put together." If the cool-headed Franklin had believed this pardonable exaggeration, he would probably have started again very speedily on the *Autobiography*, in spite of the fact that at no time had he been much bitten by the ambition to win fame as an author.

Finally, at Passy some time in 1784, when he had obtained a little leisure from public affairs, he took the letters of James and Vaughan and used them as a starting point for the continuation of his narrative. He had no copy of the initial fragment by him, but he remembered correctly that he had proceeded as far in his story as the establishment of the Philadelphia Public Library about 1730, and he began with that, repeating himself only to a trifling extent.

He accomplished little, however,—only about eighteen small pages,—and the next year, in the summer, he sailed for America. He expected to get help from his papers in composing the *Autobiography*, but he found that many of these had been lost. He was ill, and yet he was not allowed to retire from public life, for he was elected president, that is, governor, of Pennsylvania in 1785, 1786, and 1787, and he was also chosen a delegate to the convention that framed the Constitution of the United States. It is no wonder, then, that, despite the entreaties of friends that he should let nothing hinder his completion of the *Autobiography*, he waited until August, 1788, before resuming the work. This time he was able to compose an amount slightly larger than the initial portion, and he carried the story to his arrival in London, the 27th of July, 1757. Here all the early editions of the *Autobiography* stopped, for reasons that will soon appear. Franklin, though he was growing feebler, did not despair of being able to add an account of his later life, and in his last year he wrote about six small pages, which gave, in a very abridged form, an account of the years from 1757 to 1762. These pages were not printed in English until 1868, when Mr. John Bigelow published the first authentic edition of the *Autobiography*. In the seventy-eight years that had elapsed since the old statesman's death in 1790 his

masterpiece had suffered stranger treatment than often falls to the lot of a book.

When Franklin broke off his narrative at the year 1757 he caused copies to be made, and sent them to friends in England and France. After his death his grandson and literary executor, William Temple Franklin, announced that he would soon publish his grandfather's writings, and he seems to have taken steps to keep the owners of the copies of the *Autobiography* from allowing an expectant public to read that much-talked-of work in an unauthorized edition. What happened next has never been thoroughly explained. William Temple Franklin secured some unknown employment that yielded him a high remuneration and gave him an excuse for postponing his promised edition. This postponement became chronic, and it was charged that he had been bribed by the British government, which presumably had reasons for not wishing the papers of the great agent of the colonies to see the light. This charge is now held to have been absurd, and Temple Franklin's delay, which lasted until 1817, is set down to his temperamental laziness and fussiness; but the whole matter is still somewhat mysterious.

More mysterious is the way the *Autobiography* got into print long before Temple Franklin was ready to publish it. Early in 1791 a certain Buisson issued at Paris a French translation of that portion of the narrative dealing with Franklin's life as far as the year 1731. The translation had been made by a Dr. Jacques Gibelin, and he seems in some unexplained way to have had access to one of the genuine copies. His French version was full of blunders, but people were too much interested in Franklin to mind these, and the book became popular. In 1792 a German version was made from this French one, and the next year, Temple Franklin

having apparently abandoned the field, two English publishers tried to satisfy the public demand with two translations of Gibelin's translation. One of these was carefully revised; the other added to the blunders already made by the Frenchman. In 1794 a new German translation was made from the better English version of the bad French translation, and four years later this same English version served as the basis for a new, though augmented, French translation. Here the mind grows dizzy, and is glad to pass over some thirty years to 1828, when Jules Renouard made a fourth French translation of the *Autobiography*, which—fortunately and at last—was based on Franklin's original manuscript and included the few pages written during the closing year of his life.

How had the original manuscript got to France? The answer to this question brings us back to William Temple Franklin, who in 1817, with the help of a publisher's clerk, had managed, after twenty-seven years' delay, to begin the publication of his long-promised edition. It will be remembered that in 1789 Franklin sent copies of all he had then written of the *Autobiography* to friends in England and France. One of these copies went to his friend, M. Le Veillard, who a little later was guillotined during the Terror. For this fair copy William Temple Franklin some time afterward offered to exchange the original manuscript, apparently because he was too lazy to make or have made a good copy for the press, and perhaps because he thought he could amend his grandfather's English more easily on clean sheets. This truly astonishing offer was at once accepted by the Le Veillard heirs, and for many years Englishmen and Americans interested in relics of Franklin remained in ignorance of the whereabouts of the original manuscript of the most famous of all his writings.

In 1866 Mr. John Bigelow, then our minister to France, who for various reasons had come to the conclusion that the manuscript must be in that country, spoke of the matter to the French publicist, M. Édouard Laboulaye. The latter promised to search for the documents, and in about seven months he was able to report to Mr. Bigelow, in the words, or rather word, of Archimedes, that he had succeeded in discovering it. The precious manuscript and some other relics of Franklin were in the hands of M. de Senarmont, a relative of the Le Veillards, who was willing to sell his treasure for 25,000 francs. On January 26, 1867, Mr. Bigelow paid the price fixed, and the next year he was able to give the world the first authentic edition in English of Franklin's masterpiece. He found that the edition prepared by William Temple Franklin, which had delighted two generations of readers, was not only not entirely complete, since it lacked the few pages written during Franklin's last year, but did not at all fairly represent the old philosopher-statesman's actual language.

Less than a century ago editors had curious ideas as to their responsibility to the persons whose writings they edited. They thought it necessary that great men like Washington and Franklin should be made to express themselves in elegant and correctly spelled English, whenever homely idioms and eccentric orthography had slipped into their epistles. William Temple Franklin was an editor after the very heart of his own times. Lazy and procrastinating he might be in most matters, but he must be counted sedulous and officious in amending his grandfather's English. Mr. Bigelow estimates that the dutiful (or undutiful) editor made about twelve hundred departures from the original. For example, it seemed to the grandson undignified for his illustrious

ancestor to speak of "footing it to London." "Walking" gave less offense to sensitive ears and was quietly substituted for the offending phrase.

Such in brief are the fortunes of Franklin's *Autobiography*, a book which has been translated into numerous languages and has instructed and charmed as many readers as any book of its kind written in modern times. The garbled, less racy version still circulates, but seems destined to be eventually superseded by the genuine form of what has now every claim to be regarded as the first American, as well as a great English, classic. Its homely merits of clearness, sincerity, and straightforwardness need no comment. It cannot help being interesting, simply because it is the plain unvarnished story of the early years of Benjamin Franklin. The list of its adventures is almost sufficient to prove "that a good book rightly seems to have as many lives as the traditional cat. The emendations of William Temple Franklin and the blunders of the early translators could not prevent the *Autobiography* from taking its place at or near the very top of such self-revelations; and neither the accidents of war nor those of peace, perhaps to be more dreaded, could rob the world of so valuable a possession as so useful a man's account of his own life."

The fate of Franklin's other writings is almost, if not fully, as curious as that of the *Autobiography*. The seventy-six folio volumes of documents now owned by the American Philosophical Society of Philadelphia were left behind him in this country by William Temple Franklin, apparently because he did not perceive their value. The manuscripts which he did take abroad with him were stored, after his edition had appeared, with his London bankers. He died in 1823, and his widow removed the documents. "In 1840 they were found

'loosely bundled up' on the top shelf of a tailor's shop in St. James's Street [London], where Temple Franklin had lodged. Many of the papers had doubtless been destroyed, and others were being cut into patterns at the time of the discovery." The rescuer tried to sell them, but failed. Eleven years later the distinguished bibliophile, Henry Stevens, secured them. He put them in order, and finally sold them to the United States government. It was not until 1903 that the third most important collection of Franklin's papers reached its proper destination, the Library of the University of Pennsylvania, which Franklin helped to found. It consists of more than eight hundred of the documents left behind by William Temple Franklin. Instead of passing into the hands of the American Philosophical Society from those of Charles P. Fox, son of the George Fox to whom Temple Franklin bequeathed them, they drifted to "a garret over the stable at Champlost, the home of the Fox family." A Miss Fox determined to sell them to the paper mills, and to purchase with the proceeds a new carpet for her kitchen. But a visitor, Mrs. Holbrook, remonstrated and succeeded in saving all but one barrel, which had already gone to its evil destination. She was rewarded by a gift of most of the documents she had rescued. They passed to her son, from whom, through the efforts of the well-known physician and writer, Dr. S. Weir Mitchell, they were secured by the University of Pennsylvania. As for the small collections of Franklin documents held in the European archives, and the letters owned by autograph collectors, their name seems to be legion; and yet valuable portions of the great statesman's correspondence have eluded the diligent search of Professor Smyth.

But why, in conclusion, are we so interested in discovering every scrap of writing that came from or to Benjamin

Franklin? Why within seventy years have we had three editions of Franklin's works, each in ten large volumes and each gaining on its predecessor in the number of items included, but none yet complete? These facts are partly explained, of course, by the fact that, after Washington, Franklin was probably the most important figure in the late colonial and the Revolutionary periods, portions of our history that possess perennial interest. The historian needs all the light he can get on those periods; hence he welcomes the fullest possible collections of the writings of all who were then prominent. But Franklin is almost the only one of the great men of his day who makes a wider appeal than to students of history alone. Students of literature and general readers alike are interested in him, though, to be sure, they do not find it necessary or even pleasing to read everything he wrote; for example, his diplomatic letters, his economic and political tracts, his disquisitions on almost every branch of science then known.

This wider appeal is not made because Franklin was in any true sense a man of letters or a professional author. He did not write for money or fame, he did not undertake elaborate books,—he was too restless and versatile for that,—and he paid little attention to his style. What he wrote came, as it were, all in the day's work. He was a journalist and pamphleteer and a social and economic reformer, much as Daniel Defoe had been before him, but, unlike Defoe, he had little aptitude for those forms of literature in which imagination plays a great part. Technically speaking, then, he was scarcely a literary man at all. Yet he is practically the only American author before Irving who is widely read to-day, and he compares favorably in substance and in style with many a distinguished British writer of his century, which, in

the opinion of not a few good judges, was the golden age of English prose. He is still famous as the first true American humorist; we still quote "Poor Richard"; we read the Bagatelles with pleasure; we thumb the *Autobiography*; and if we are true Franklinians, we chuckle over many a homely touch in his familiar letters, such as his sending the wife of his friend Bishop Shipley "a specimen of the American dry'd apples . . . that she may judge whether it will be worth while to try the Practice."

Is not this mainly because Franklin in his virtues and in his vices—for he had vices—was intensely human, and because one of his special virtues was his straightforward habit of revealing his human characteristics? He was extraordinarily versatile and endowed with a genius for enjoying and describing all that makes up the prose of life. If we want poetry, we must leave Franklin undisturbed on our shelves, and take up Shakespeare or Milton. But fortunately a love for poetry does not exclude a love for prose. Franklin's *Autobiography* and Defoe's *Robinson Crusoe* are fully worthy to stand on the same shelf with the plays of Shakespeare and *Paradise Lost*.

W. P. TRENT

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# THE AUTOBIOGRAPHY OF BENJAMIN FRANKLIN

## FRANKLIN'S ANCESTRY, PARENTAGE, AND YOUTH

TWYFORD, *at the Bishop of St. Asaph's*, 1771

DEAR SON: I have ever had pleasure in obtaining any little anecdotes of my ancestors. You may remember the inquiries I made among the remains of my relations when you were with me in England, and the journey I undertook for that purpose. Imagining it may be equally agreeable to you to know the circumstances of my life, many of which you are yet unacquainted with, and expecting the enjoyment of a week's uninterrupted leisure in my present country retirement, I sit down to write them for you. To which I have besides some other inducements. Having emerged from the poverty and obscurity in which I was born and bred, to a state of affluence and some degree of reputation in the world, and having gone so far through life with a considerable share of felicity, the conducing means I made use of, which with the blessing of God so well succeeded, my posterity may like to know, as they may find some of them suitable to their own situations, and therefore fit to be imitated.

That felicity, when I reflected on it, has induced me sometimes to say, that were it offered to my choice, I should have no objection to a repetition of the same life from its begin-

ning, only asking the advantages authors have in a second edition to correct some faults of the first. So I might, besides correcting the faults, change some sinister accidents and events of it for others more favorable. But though this were denied, I should still accept the offer. Since such a repetition is not to be expected, the next thing most like living one's life over again seems to be a recollection of that life, and to make that recollection as durable as possible by putting it down in writing.

Hereby, too, I shall indulge the inclination so natural in old men, to be talking of themselves and their own past actions; and I shall indulge it without being tiresome to others, who, through respect to age, might conceive themselves obliged to give me a hearing, since this may be read or not as any one pleases. And, lastly (I may as well confess it, since my denial of it will be believed by nobody), perhaps I shall a good deal gratify my own *vanity*. Indeed, I scarce ever heard or saw the introductory words, "*Without vanity I may say*," etc., but some vain thing immediately followed. Most people dislike vanity in others, whatever share they have of it themselves; but I give it fair quarter wherever I meet with it, being persuaded that it is often productive of good to the possessor, and to others that are within his sphere of action; and therefore, in many cases, it would not be altogether absurd if a man were to thank God for his vanity among the other comforts of life.

And now I speak of thanking God, I desire with all humility to acknowledge that I owe the mentioned happiness of my past life to His kind providence, which led me to the means I used and gave them success. My belief of this induces me to *hope*, though I must not *presume*, that the same goodness will still be exercised toward me, in continuing that happiness, or enabling me to bear a fatal reverse, which I may experience as others have done; the complexion of my

future fortune being known to Him only in whose power it is to bless to us even our afflictions.

The notes one of my uncles (who had the same kind of curiosity in collecting family anecdotes) once put into my hands, furnished me with several particulars relating to our ancestors. From these notes I learned that the family had lived in the same village, Ecton, in Northamptonshire, for three hundred years, and how much longer he knew not (perhaps from the time when the name of Franklin, that before was the name of an order of people, was assumed by them as a surname when others took surnames all over the kingdom), on a freehold of about thirty acres, aided by the smith's business, which had continued in the family till his time, the eldest son being always bred to that business; a custom which he and my father followed as to their eldest sons. When I searched the registers at Ecton, I found an account of their births, marriages and burials from the year 1555 only, there being no registers kept in that parish at any time preceding. By that register I perceived that I was the youngest son of the youngest son for five generations back. My grandfather Thomas, who was born in 1598, lived at Ecton till he grew too old to follow business longer, when he went to live with his son John, a dyer at Banbury, in Oxfordshire, with whom my father served an apprenticeship. There my grandfather died and lies buried. We saw his gravestone in 1758. His eldest son Thomas lived in the house at Ecton, and left it with the land to his only child, a daughter, who, with her husband, one Fisher, of Wellingborough, sold it to Mr. Isted, now lord of the manor there. My grandfather had four sons that grew up, viz.: Thomas, John, Benjamin and Josiah. I will give you what account I can of them, at this distance from my papers, and if these are not lost in my absence, you will among them find many more particulars.

Thomas was bred a smith under his father; but, being ingenious, and encouraged in learning (as all my brothers were) by an Esquire Palmer, then the principal gentleman in that parish, he qualified himself for the business of scrivener; became a considerable man in the county; was a chief mover of all public-spirited undertakings for the county or town of Northampton, and his own village, of which many instances were related of him; and much taken notice of and patronized by the then Lord Halifax. He died in 1702, January 6, old style, just four years to a day before I was born. The account we received of his life and character from some old people at Ecton, I remember, struck you as something extraordinary, from its similarity to what you knew of mine. "Had he died on the same day," you said, "one might have supposed a transmigration."

John was bred a dyer, I believe, of woolens. Benjamin was bred a silk dyer, serving an apprenticeship at London. He was an ingenious man. I remember him well, for when I was a boy he came over to my father in Boston, and lived in the house with us some years. He lived to a great age. His grandson, Samuel Franklin, now lives in Boston. He left behind him two quarto volumes, in manuscript, of his own poetry, consisting of little occasional pieces, addressed to his friends and relations, of which the following, sent to me, is a specimen. He had formed a short-hand of his own, which he taught me, but, never practising it, I have now forgot it. I was named after this uncle, there being a particular affection between him and my father. He was very pious, a great attender of sermons of the best preachers, which he took down in his short-hand, and had with him many volumes of them. He was also much of a politician; too much, perhaps, for his station. There fell lately into my hands, in London, a collection he had made of

all the principal pamphlets relating to public affairs, from 1641 to 1717; many of the volumes are wanting, as appears by the numbering, but there still remain eight volumes in folio, and twenty-four in quarto and in octavo. A dealer in old books met with them, and knowing me by my sometimes buying of him, he brought them to me. It seems my uncle must have left them here when he went to America, which was above fifty years since. There are many of his notes in the margin.

This obscure family of ours was early in the Reformation, and continued Protestants through the reign of Queen Mary [1553–1558], when they were sometimes in danger of trouble on account of their zeal against popery. They had got an English Bible, and to conceal and secure it, it was fastened open with tapes under and within the cover of a joint-stool. When my great-great-grandfather read it to his family, he turned up the joint-stool upon his knees, turning over the leaves then under the tapes. One of the children stood at the door to give notice if he saw the apparitor coming, who was an officer of the spiritual court. In that case the stool was turned down again upon its feet, when the Bible remained concealed under it as before. This anecdote I had from my uncle Benjamin. The family continued all of the Church of England till about the end of Charles the Second's reign, when some of the ministers that had been outed for non-conformity holding conventicles in Northamptonshire, Benjamin and Josiah adhered to them, and so continued all their lives: the rest of the family remained with the Episcopal Church.

Josiah, my father, married young, and carried his wife, with three children, into New England about 1682. The conventicles having been forbidden by law, and frequently disturbed, induced some considerable men of his acquaintance to remove to that country, and he was prevailed with to accom-

pany them thither, where they expected to enjoy their mode of religion with freedom. By the same wife he had four children more born there, and by a second wife ten more,—in all, seventeen,—of which I remember thirteen sitting at one time at his table, who all grew up to be men and women, and married. I was the youngest son, and the youngest child but two, and was born in Boston, New England. My mother, the second wife, was Abiah Folger, daughter of Peter Folger, one of the first settlers of New England, of whom honorable mention is made by Cotton Mather, in his church history of that country, as "*a godly, learned Englishman*," if I remember the words rightly. I have heard that he wrote sundry small occasional pieces, but only one of them was printed, which I saw, now many years since. It was written in 1675, in the home-spun verse of that time and people and addressed to those then concerned in the government there. It was in favor of liberty of conscience, and in behalf of the Baptists, Quakers, and other sectaries that had been under persecution, ascribing the Indian wars and other distresses that had befallen the country to that persecution, as so many judgments of God to punish so heinous an offence, and exhorting a repeal of those uncharitable laws. The whole appeared to me as written with a good deal of decent plainness and manly freedom. The six concluding lines I remember, though I have forgotten the two first of the stanza: but the purport of them was that his censures proceeded from good-will, and, therefore, he would be known to be the author.

Because to be a libeller (says he)
I hate it with my heart;
From Sherburne town, where now I dwell
My name I do put here;
Without offence your real friend,
It is Peter Folgier.

My elder brothers were all put apprentices to different trades. I was put to the grammar school at eight years of age, my father intending to devote me, as the tithe of his sons, to the service of the Church. My early readiness in learning to read (which must have been very early, as I do not remember when I could not read), and the opinion of all his friends, that I should certainly make a good scholar, encouraged him in this purpose of his. My uncle Benjamin, too, approved of it, and proposed to give me all his short-hand volumes of sermons, I suppose as a stock to set up with, if I would learn his character. I continued, however, at the grammar school not quite one year, though in that time I had risen gradually from the middle of the class of that year to be the head of it, and further, was removed into the next class above it, in order to go with that into the third at the end of the year. But my father, in the mean time, from a view of the expense of a college education, which, having so large a family, he could not well afford, and the mean living many so educated were afterwards able to obtain—reasons that he gave to his friends in my hearing—altered his first intention, took me from the grammar school, and sent me to a school for writing and arithmetic, kept by a then famous man, Mr. George Brownell, very successful in his profession generally, and that by mild, encouraging methods. Under him I acquired fair writing pretty soon; but I failed in the arithmetic, and made no progress in it. At ten years old I was taken home to assist my father in his business, which was that of a tallow-chandler and soap-boiler; a business he was not bred to, but had assumed on his arrival in New England, and on finding his dyeing trade would not maintain his family, being in little request. Accordingly, I was employed in cutting wick for the candles, filling the dipping

mold and the molds for cast candles, attending the shop, going of errands, etc.

I disliked the trade, and had a strong inclination for the sea, but my father declared against it; however, living near the water, I was much in and about it, learnt early to swim well and to manage boats, and when in a boat or canoe with other boys, I was commonly allowed to govern, especially in any case of difficulty; and upon other occasions I was generally a leader among the boys, and sometimes led them into scrapes, of which I will mention one instance, as it shows an early projecting public spirit, though not then justly conducted.

There was a salt-marsh that bounded part of the mill-pond, on the edge of which, at high water, we used to stand to fish for minnows. By much trampling we had made it a mere quagmire. My proposal was to build a wharf there, fit for us to stand upon, and I showed my comrades a large heap of stones, which were intended for a new house near the marsh, and which would very well suit our purpose. Accordingly, in the evening, when the workmen were gone, I assembled a number of my play-fellows, and working with them diligently like so many emmets, sometimes two or three to a stone, we brought them all away and built our little wharf. The next morning the workmen were surprised at missing the stones, which were found in our wharf. Inquiry was made after the removers. We were discovered and complained of. Several of us were corrected by our fathers; and, though I pleaded the usefulness of the work, mine convinced me that nothing was useful which was not honest.

I think you may like to know something of his person and character. He had an excellent constitution of body, was of middle stature, but well set, and very strong; he was ingen-

ious, could draw prettily, was skilled a little in music, and had a clear pleasing voice, so that when he played psalm tunes on his violin and sung withal, as he sometimes did in an evening after the business of the day was over, it was extremely agreeable to hear. He had a mechanical genius too, and, on occasion, was very handy in the use of other tradesmen's tools; but his great excellence lay in a sound understanding and solid judgment in prudential matters, both in private and public affairs. In the latter, indeed, he was never employed, the numerous family he had to educate and the straitness of his circumstances keeping him close to his trade; but I remember well his being frequently visited by leading people, who consulted him for his opinion in affairs of the town or of the church he belonged to, and showed a good deal of respect for his judgment and advice: he was also much consulted by private persons about their affairs when any difficulty occurred, and frequently chosen an arbitrator between contending parties. At his table he liked to have, as often as he could, some sensible friend or neighbor to converse with, and always took care to start some ingenious or useful topic for discourse, which might tend to improve the minds of his children. By this means he turned our attention to what was good, just, and prudent in the conduct of life: and little or no notice was ever taken of what related to the victuals on the table, whether they were well or ill dressed, in or out of season, of good or bad flavor, preferable or inferior to this or that other thing of the kind, so that I was brought up in such a perfect inattention to those matters as to be quite indifferent what kind of food was set before me, and so unobservant of it, that to this day if I am asked I can scarce tell a few hours after dinner what I dined upon. This has been a convenience to me in traveling, where my

companions have been sometimes very unhappy for want of a suitable gratification of their more delicate, because better instructed, tastes and appetites.

My mother had likewise an excellent constitution: she nursed all her ten children. I never knew either my father or mother to have any sickness but that of which they died, he at eighty-nine, and she at eighty-five years of age. They lie buried together at Boston, where I some years since placed a marble over their grave, with this inscription:

JOSIAH FRANKLIN,
and
ABIAH his wife,
lie here interred.
They lived lovingly together in wedlock
fifty-five years.
Without an estate, or any gainful employment,
By constant labor and industry,
with God's blessing,
They maintained a large family
comfortably,
and brought up thirteen children
and seven grandchildren
reputably.
From this instance, reader,
Be encouraged to diligence in thy calling,
And distrust not Providence.
He was a pious and prudent man;
She, a discreet and virtuous woman.
Their youngest son,
In filial regard to their memory,
Places this stone.
J. F. born 1655, died 1744, Ætat. 89.
A. F. born 1667, died 1752, ——85.

By my rambling digressions I perceive myself to be grown old. I used to write more methodically. But one does not dress for private company as for a public ball. 'Tis perhaps only negligence.

To return: I continued thus employed in my father's business for two years, that is, till I was twelve years old; and my brother John, who was bred to that business, having left my father, married, and set up for himself at Rhode Island, there was all appearance that I was destined to supply his place, and become a tallow-chandler. But my dislike to the trade continuing, my father was under apprehensions that if he did not find one for me more agreeable, I should break away and get to sea, as his son Josiah had done, to his great vexation. He therefore sometimes took me to walk with him, and see joiners, bricklayers, turners, braziers, etc., at their work, that he might observe my inclination, and endeavor to fix it on some trade or other on land. It has ever since been a pleasure to me to see good workmen handle their tools: and it has been useful to me, having learnt so much by it as to be able to do little jobs myself in my house when a workman could not readily be got, and to construct little machines for my experiments, while the intention of making the experiment was fresh and warm in my mind. My father at last fixed upon the cutler's trade, and my uncle Benjamin's son Samuel, who was bred to that business in London, being about that time established in Boston, I was sent to be with him some time on liking. But his expectations of a fee with me displeasing my father, I was taken home again.

From a child I was fond of reading, and all the little money that came into my hands was ever laid out in books. Pleased with the Pilgrim's Progress, my first collection was

of John Bunyan's works in separate little volumes. I afterward sold them to enable me to buy R. Burton's Historical Collections; they were small chapmen's books, and cheap, forty or fifty in all. My father's little library consisted chiefly of books in polemic divinity, most of which I read, and have since often regretted that, at a time when I had such a thirst for knowledge, more proper books had not fallen in my way, since it was now resolved I should not be a clergyman. Plutarch's Lives was there, in which I read abundantly, and I still think that time spent to great advantage. There was also a book of De Foe's, called an Essay on Projects, and another of Dr. Mather's, called Essays to do Good, which perhaps gave me a turn of thinking that had an influence on some of the principal future events of my life.

This bookish inclination at length determined my father to make me a printer, though he had already one son (James) of that profession. In 1717 my brother James returned from England with a press and letters to set up his business in Boston. I liked it much better than that of my father, but still had a hankering for the sea. To prevent the apprehended effect of such an inclination, my father was impatient to have me bound to my brother. I stood out some time, but at last was persuaded, and signed the indentures when I was yet but twelve years old. I was to serve as an apprentice till I was twenty-one years of age, only I was to be allowed journeyman's wages during the last year. In a little time I made great proficiency in the business, and became a useful hand to my brother. I now had access to better books. An acquaintance with the apprentices of booksellers enabled me sometimes to borrow a small one, which I was careful to return soon and clean. Often I sat up in my room reading the greatest part of the night, when the book was borrowed

in the evening and to be returned early in the morning, lest it should be missed or wanted.

And after some time an ingenious tradesman, Mr. Matthew Adams, who had a pretty collection of books, and who frequented our printing-house, took notice of me, invited me to his library, and very kindly lent me such books as I chose to read. I now took a fancy to poetry, and made some little pieces; my brother, thinking it might turn to account, encouraged me, and put me on composing occasional ballads. One was called *The Lighthouse Tragedy* and contained an account of the drowning of Captain Worthilake, with his two daughters: the other was a sailor's song, on the taking of *Teach* (or Blackbeard) the pirate. They were wretched stuff, in the Grub-street-ballad style; and when they were printed he sent me about the town to sell them. The first sold wonderfully, the event, being recent, having made a great noise. This flattered my vanity; but my father discouraged me by ridiculing my performances, and telling me verse-makers were generally beggars. So I escaped being a poet, most probably a very bad one; but as prose writing has been of great use to me in the course of my life, and was a principal means of my advancement, I shall tell you how, in such a situation, I acquired what little ability I have in that way.

There was another bookish lad in the town, John Collins by name, with whom I was intimately acquainted. We sometimes disputed, and very fond we were of argument, and very desirous of confuting one another, which disputatious turn, by the way, is apt to become a very bad habit, making people often extremely disagreeable in company by the contradiction that is necessary to bring it into practice; and thence, besides souring and spoiling the conversation, is productive of disgusts and perhaps enmities where you may have occa-

sion for friendship. I had caught it by reading my father's books of dispute about religion. Persons of good sense, I have since observed, seldom fall into it, except lawyers, university men, and men of all sorts that have been bred at Edinborough.

A question was once, somehow or other, started between Collins and me, of the propriety of educating the female sex in learning, and their abilities for study. He was of opinion that it was improper, and that they were naturally unequal to it. I took the contrary side, perhaps a little for dispute's sake. He was naturally more eloquent, had a ready plenty of words; and sometimes, as I thought, bore me down more by his fluency than by the strength of his reasons. As we parted without settling the point, and were not to see one another again for some time, I sat down to put my arguments in writing, which I copied fair and sent to him. He answered, and I replied. Three or four letters of a side had passed, when my father happened to find my papers and read them. Without entering into the discussion, he took occasion to talk to me about the manner of my writing; observed that, though I had the advantage of my antagonist in correct spelling and pointing (which I owed to the printing-house), I fell far short in elegance of expression, in method and in perspicuity, of which he convinced me by several instances. I saw the justice of his remarks, and thence grew more attentive to the manner in writing, and determined to endeavor at improvement.

About this time I met with an odd volume of the *Spectator*. It was the third. I had never before seen any of them. I bought it, read it over, and was much delighted with it. I thought the writing excellent, and wished, if possible, to imitate it. With this view, I took some of the papers, and

making short hints of the sentiments in each sentence, laid them by a few days, and then, without looking at the book, tried to complete the papers again, by expressing each hinted sentiment at length, and as fully as it had been expressed before, in any suitable words that should come to hand. Then I compared my *Spectator* with the original, discovered some of my faults, and corrected them. But I found I wanted a stock of words, or a readiness in recollecting and using them, which I thought I should have acquired before that time if I had gone on making verses; since the continual occasion for words of the same import, but of different length, to suit the measure, or of different sound for the rhyme, would have laid me under a constant necessity of searching for variety, and also have tended to fix that variety in my mind, and make me master of it. Therefore, I took some of the tales and turned them into verse; and after a time, when I had pretty well forgotten the prose, turned them back again. I also sometimes jumbled my collections of hints into confusion, and after some weeks endeavored to reduce them into the best order, before I began to form the full sentences and complete the paper. This was to teach me method in the arrangement of thoughts. By comparing my work afterwards with the original, I discovered many faults and amended them; but I sometimes had the pleasure of fancying that, in certain particulars of small import, I had been lucky enough to improve the method or the language, and this encouraged me to think I might possibly in time come to be a tolerable English writer, of which I was extremely ambitious. My time for these exercises, and for reading, was at night, after work, or before it began, in the morning, or on Sundays, when I contrived to be in the printing-house alone, evading as much as I could the common attendance on public worship

which my father used to exact of me when I was under his care, and which, indeed, I still thought a duty, though I could not, as it seemed to me, afford time to practise it.

When about sixteen years of age I happened to meet with a book written by one Tryon, recommending a vegetable diet. I determined to go into it. My brother, being yet unmarried, did not keep house, but boarded himself and his apprentices in another family. My refusing to eat flesh occasioned an inconveniency, and I was frequently chid for my singularity. I made myself acquainted with Tryon's manner of preparing some of his dishes, such as boiling potatoes or rice, making hasty pudding, and a few others, and then proposed to my brother, that if he would give me, weekly, half the money he paid for my board, I would board myself. He instantly agreed to it, and I presently found that I could save half what he paid me. This was an additional fund for buying books. But I had another advantage in it. My brother and the rest going from the printing-house to their meals, I remained there alone, and, dispatching presently my light repast, which often was no more than a biscuit or a slice of bread, a handful of raisins or a tart from the pastry cook's and a glass of water, had the rest of the time, till their return, for study, in which I made the greater progress, from that greater clearness of head and quicker apprehension which usually attend temperance in eating and drinking.

And now it was that, being on some occasion made ashamed of my ignorance in figures, which I had twice failed in learning when at school, I took Cocker's book of Arithmetic, and went through the whole by myself with great ease. I also read Seller's and Shermy's books of Navigation, and became acquainted with the little geometry they contain; but never proceeded far in that science. And I read about this time

Locke *On Human Understanding*, and the *Art of Thinking*, by Messrs. du Port Royal.

While I was intent on improving my language, I met with an English grammar (I think it was Greenwood's), at the end of which there were two little sketches of the arts of rhetoric and logic, the latter finishing with a specimen of a dispute in the Socratic method; and soon after I procured Xenophon's Memorable Things of Socrates, wherein there are many instances of the same method. I was charmed with it, adopted it, dropped my abrupt contradiction and positive argumentation, and put on the humble inquirer and doubter. And being then, from reading Shaftesbury and Collins, become a real doubter in many points of our religious doctrine, I found this method safest for myself and very embarrassing to those against whom I used it; therefore I took a delight in it, practised it continually, and grew very artful and expert in drawing people, even of superior knowledge, into concessions, the consequences of which they did not foresee, entangling them in difficulties out of which they could not extricate themselves, and so obtaining victories that neither myself nor my cause always deserved. I continued this method some few years, but gradually left it, retaining only the habit of expressing myself in terms of modest diffidence; never using, when I advanced any thing that may possibly be disputed, the words *certainly*, *undoubtedly*, or any others that give the air of positiveness to an opinion; but rather say, I conceive or apprehend a thing to be so and so; it appears to me, or *I should think it so or so,* for such and such reasons; or *I imagine it to be so*; or *it is so, if I am not mistaken.* This habit, I believe, has been of great advantage to me when I have had occasion to inculcate my opinions, and persuade men into measures that I have been from time to time

engaged in promoting; and, as the chief ends of conversation are to *inform* or to be *informed*, to *please* or to *persuade*, I wish well-meaning, sensible men would not lessen their power of doing good by a positive assuming manner, that seldom fails to disgust, tends to create opposition, and to defeat every one of those purposes for which speech was given to us, to wit, giving or receiving information or pleasure. For, if you would inform, a positive and dogmatical manner in advancing your sentiments may provoke contradiction and prevent a candid attention. If you wish information and improvement from the knowledge of others, and yet at the same time express yourself as firmly fixed in your present opinions, modest, sensible men, who do not love disputation, will probably leave you undisturbed in the possession of your error. And by such a manner, you can seldom hope to recommend yourself in *pleasing* your hearers, or to persuade those whose concurrence you desire. Pope says, judiciously:

> *Men should be taught as if you taught them not,*
> *And things unknown propos'd as things forgot;*

further recommending to us

> To speak, tho' sure, with seeming diffidence.

And he might have coupled with this line that which he has coupled with another, I think, less properly,

> For want of modesty is want of sense.

If you ask, Why less properly? I must repeat the lines,

> Immodest words admit of no defense,
> For want of modesty is want of sense.

Now, is not *want of sense* (where a man is so unfortunate as to want it) some apology for his *want of modesty*? and would not the lines stand more justly thus?

> Immodest words admit *but* this defense,
> That want of modesty is want of sense.

This, however, I should submit to better judgments.

My brother had, in 1720 or 1721, begun to print a newspaper. It was the second that appeared in America, and was called *The New England Courant*. The only one before it was the *Boston News-Letter*. I remember his being dissuaded by some of his friends from the undertaking, as not likely to succeed, one newspaper being, in their judgment, enough for America. At this time (1771) there are not less than five and twenty. He went on, however, with the undertaking, and after having worked in composing the types and printing off the sheets, I was employed to carry the papers through the streets to the customers.

He had some ingenious men among his friends, who amused themselves by writing little pieces for this paper, which gained it credit and made it more in demand, and these gentlemen often visited us. Hearing their conversations, and their accounts of the approbation their papers were received with, I was excited to try my hand among them; but, being still a boy, and suspecting that my brother would object to printing any thing of mine in his paper if he knew it to be mine, I contrived to disguise my hand, and, writing an anonymous paper, I put it in at night under the door of the printing-house. It was found in the morning, and communicated to his writing friends when they called in as usual. They read it, commented on it in my hearing, and I had the exquisite pleasure of finding it met with their approbation,

and that, in their different guesses at the author, none were named but men of some character among us for learning and ingenuity. I suppose now, that I was rather lucky in my judges, and that perhaps they were not really so very good ones as I then esteemed them.

Encouraged, however, by this, I wrote and conveyed in the same way to the press several more papers which were equally approved; and I kept my secret till my small fund of sense for such performances was pretty well exhausted, and then I discovered it, when I began to be considered a little more by my brother's acquaintance, and in a manner that did not quite please him, as he thought, probably with reason, that it tended to make me too vain. And, perhaps, this might be one occasion of the differences that we began to have about this time. Though a brother, he considered himself as my master, and me as his apprentice, and, accordingly, expected the same services from me as he would from another, while I thought he demeaned me too much in some he required of me, who from a brother expected more indulgence. Our disputes were often brought before our father, and I fancy I was either generally in the right, or else a better pleader, because the judgment was generally in my favor. But my brother was passionate and had often beaten me, which I took extremely amiss; and, thinking my apprenticeship very tedious, I was continually wishing for some opportunity of shortening it, which at length offered in a manner unexpected.

One of the pieces in our newspaper on some political point, which I have now forgotten, gave offense to the Assembly. He was taken up, censured, and imprisoned for a month, by the speaker's warrant, I suppose, because he would not discover his author. I too was taken up and examined before

the council; but, though I did not give them any satisfaction, they contented themselves with admonishing me, and dismissed me, considering me, perhaps, as an apprentice, who was bound to keep his master's secrets.

During my brother's confinement, which I resented a good deal, notwithstanding our private differences, I had the management of the paper; and I made bold to give our rulers some rubs in it, which my brother took very kindly, while others began to consider me in an unfavorable light, as a young genius that had a turn for libelling and satire. My brother's discharge was accompanied with an order of the House (a very odd one), that "*James Franklin should no longer print the paper called the New England Courant.*"

There was a consultation held in our printing-house among his friends what he should do in this case. Some proposed to evade the order by changing the name of the paper; but my brother, seeing inconveniences in that, it was finally concluded on as a better way, to let it be printed for the future under the name of BENJAMIN FRANKLIN; and to avoid the censure of the Assembly that might fall on him as still printing it by his apprentice, the contrivance was that my old indenture should be returned to me, with a full discharge on the back of it, to be shown on occasion, but to secure to him the benefit of my service, I was to sign new indentures for the remainder of the term, which were to be kept private. A very flimsy scheme it was; however, it was immediately executed, and the paper went on accordingly under my name for several months.

At length, a fresh difference arising between my brother and me, I took upon me to assert my freedom, presuming that he would not venture to produce the new indentures.

It was not fair in me to take this advantage, and this I therefore reckon one of the first errata of my life; but the unfairness of it weighed little with me when under the impressions of resentment for the blows his passion too often urged him to bestow upon me, though he was otherwise not an ill-natured man; perhaps I was too saucy and provoking.

## FRANKLIN GOES TO PHILADELPHIA

When he found I would leave him he took care to prevent my getting employment in any other printing-house of the town, by going round and speaking to every master, who accordingly refused to give me work. I then thought of going to New York, as the nearest place where there was a printer; and I was rather inclined to leave Boston when I reflected that I had already made myself a little obnoxious to the governing party, and, from the arbitrary proceedings of the Assembly in my brother's case, it was likely I might, if I stayed, soon bring myself into scrapes; and further, that my indiscreet disputations about religion began to make me pointed at with horror by good people as an infidel or atheist. I determined on the point; but my father now siding with my brother, I was sensible that if I attempted to go openly, means would be used to prevent me. My friend Collins, therefore, undertook to manage a little for me. He agreed with the captain of a New York sloop for my passage, under the notion of my being a young acquaintance of his that had got into trouble, and therefore I could not appear or come away publicly. So I sold some of my books to raise a little money, was taken on board privately, and, as we had a fair wind, in three days I found myself in New York, near 300 miles from home, a boy of but seventeen (October, 1723)

without the least recommendation to, or knowledge of, any person in the place, and with very little money in my pocket.

My inclinations for the sea were by this time worn out, or I might now have gratified them. But, having a trade, and supposing myself a pretty good workman, I offered my service to the printer in the place, old Mr. William Bradford, who had been the first printer in Pennsylvania, but removed from thence upon the quarrel of George Keith. He could give me no employment, having little to do, and help enough already; but says he, "My son at Philadelphia has lately lost his principal hand, Aquila Rose, by death. If you go thither I believe he may employ you." Philadelphia was a hundred miles further; I set out, however, in a boat for Amboy, leaving my chest and things to follow me round by sea.

In crossing the bay, we met with a squall that tore our rotten sails to pieces, prevented our getting into the Kill and drove us upon Long Island. On our way a drunken Dutchman, who was a passenger, too, fell overboard; when he was sinking, I reached through the water to his shock pate, and drew him up, so that we got him in again. His ducking sobered him a little, and he went to sleep, taking first out of his pocket a book, which he desired I would dry for him. It proved to be my old favorite author, Bunyan's Pilgrim's Progress, in Dutch, finely printed on good paper, with copper cuts,—a dress better than I had ever seen it wear in its own language. I have since found that it has been translated into most of the languages of Europe, and suppose it has been more generally read than any other book except perhaps the Bible. Honest John was the first that I know of who mixed narration and dialogue,—a method of writing very engaging to the reader, who in the most interesting parts finds himself, as it were, brought into the company and present at the dis-

course. De Foe in his Crusoe, his Moll Flanders, Religious Courtship, Family Instructor, and other pieces, has imitated it with success; and Richardson has done the same in his Pamela, etc.

When we drew near the island, we found it was at a place where there could be no landing, there being a great surf on the stony beach. So we dropped anchor, and swung round towards the shore. Some people came down to the water edge and hollowed to us, as we did to them; but the wind was so high, and the surf so loud, that we could not hear so as to understand each other. There were canoes on the shore, and we made signs, and hollowed that they should fetch us; but they either did not understand us, or thought it impracticable, so they went away, and night coming on, we had no remedy but to wait till the wind should abate; and, in the mean time, the boatman and I concluded to sleep if we could; and so, crowded into the scuttle, with the Dutchman, who was still wet, and the spray beating over the head of our boat leaked through to us, so that we were soon almost as wet as he. In this manner we lay all night, with very little rest; but, the wind abating the next day, we made a shift to reach Amboy before night, having been thirty hours on the water, without victuals, or any drink but a bottle of filthy rum, the water we sailed on being salt.

In the evening I found myself very feverish, and went in to bed; but, having read somewhere that cold water drank plentifully was good for a fever, I followed the prescription, sweat plentifully most of the night, my fever left me, and in the morning, crossing the ferry, I proceeded on my journey on foot, having fifty miles to Burlington, where I was told I should find boats that would carry me the rest of the way to Philadelphia.

It rained very hard all the day; I was thoroughly soaked, and by noon a good deal tired; so I stopped at a poor inn, where I stayed all night, beginning now to wish that I had never left home. I cut so miserable a figure, too, that I found, by the questions asked me, I was suspected to be some runaway servant, and in danger of being taken up on that suspicion. However, I proceeded the next day, and got in the evening to an inn, within eight or ten miles of Burlington, kept by one Dr. Brown. He entered into conversation with me while I took some refreshment, and, finding I had read a little, became very sociable and friendly. Our acquaintance continued as long as he lived. He had been, I imagine, an itinerant doctor, for there was no town in England, or country in Europe, of which he could not give a very particular account. He had some letters, and was ingenious, but much of an unbeliever, and wickedly undertook, some years after, to travesty the Bible in doggerel verse, as Cotton had done Virgil. By this means he set many of the facts in a very ridiculous light, and might have hurt weak minds if his work had been published; but it never was.

At his house I lay that night, and the next morning reached Burlington, but had the mortification to find that the regular boats were gone a little before my coming, and no other expected to go before Tuesday, this being Saturday; wherefore I returned to an old woman in the town, of whom I had bought gingerbread to eat on the water, and asked her advice. She invited me to lodge at her house till a passage by water should offer; and being tired with my foot traveling, I accepted the invitation. She, understanding I was a printer, would have had me stay at that town and follow my business, being ignorant of the stock necessary to begin with. She was very hospitable, gave me a dinner of

ox-cheek with great good will, accepting only of a pot of ale in return; and I thought myself fixed till Tuesday should come. However, walking in the evening by the side of the river, a boat came by, which I found was going towards Philadelphia, with several people in her. They took me in, and, as there was no wind, we rowed all the way; and about midnight, not having yet seen the city, some of the company were confident we must have passed it, and would row no farther; the others knew not where we were; so we put toward the shore, got into a creek, landed near an old fence, with the rails of which we made a fire, the night being cold, in October, and there we remained till daylight. Then one of the company knew the place to be Cooper's Creek, a little above Philadelphia, which we saw as soon as we got out of the creek, and arrived there about eight or nine o'clock on the Sunday morning, and landed at the Market-street wharf.

I have been the more particular in this description of my journey, and shall be so of my first entry into that city, that you may in your mind compare such unlikely beginnings with the figure I have since made there. I was in my working dress, my best clothes being to come round by sea. I was dirty from my journey; my pockets were stuffed out with shirts and stockings, and I knew no soul nor where to look for lodging. I was fatigued with traveling, rowing and want of rest, I was very hungry; and my whole stock of cash consisted of a Dutch dollar, and about a shilling in copper. The latter I gave the people of the boat for my passage, who at first refused it, on account of my rowing; but I insisted on their taking it. A man being sometimes more generous when he has but a little money than when he has plenty, perhaps through fear of being thought to have but little.

FRANKLIN ARRIVING IN PHILADELPHIA

Then I walked up the street, gazing about, till near the market-house I met a boy with bread. I had made many a meal on bread, and, inquiring where he got it, I went immediately to the baker's he directed me to, in Second-street, and asked for biscuit, intending such as we had in Boston; but they, it seems, were not made in Philadelphia.

Then I asked for a three-penny loaf, and was told they had none such. So not considering or knowing the difference of money, and the greater cheapness nor the names of his bread, I bade him give me three-penny worth of any sort. He gave me, accordingly, three great puffy rolls. I was surprised at the quantity, but took it, and, having no room in my pockets, walked off with a roll under each arm, and eating the other. Thus I went up Market-street as far as Fourth-street, passing by the door of Mr. Read, my future wife's father; when she, standing at the door, saw me, and thought I made, as I certainly did, a most awkward, ridiculous appearance. Then I turned and went down Chestnut-street and part of Walnut-street, eating my roll all the way, and, coming round, found myself again at Market-street wharf, near the boat I came in, to which I went for a draught of the river water; and, being filled with one of my rolls, gave the other two to a woman and her child that came down the river in the boat with us, and were waiting to go further.

Thus refreshed, I walked again up the street, which by this time had many clean-dressed people in it, who were all walking the same way. I joined them, and thereby was led into the great meeting-house of the Quakers near the market. I sat down among them, and, after looking round awhile and hearing nothing said, being very drowsy through labor and want of rest the preceding night, I fell fast asleep, and continued so till the meeting broke up, when one was kind

enough to rouse me. This was, therefore, the first house I was in, or slept in, in Philadelphia.

Walking down again toward the river, and looking in the faces of people, I met a young Quaker man, whose countenance I liked, and, accosting him, requested he would tell me where a stranger could get lodging. We were then near the sign of the Three Mariners. "Here," says he, "is one place that entertains strangers, but it is not a reputable house; if thee wilt walk with me, I'll show thee a better." He brought me to the Crooked Billet in Water-street. Here I got a dinner; and, while I was eating it, several sly questions were asked me, as it seemed to be suspected from my youth and appearance, that I might be some runaway.

After dinner, my sleepiness returned, and being shown to a bed, I lay down without undressing, and slept till six in the evening, was called to supper, and went to bed again very early, and slept soundly till next morning. Then I made myself as tidy as I could, and went to Andrew Bradford the printer's. I found in the shop the old man his father, whom I had seen at New York, and who, traveling on horseback, had got to Philadelphia before me. He introduced me to his son, who received me civilly, gave me a breakfast, but told me he did not at present want a hand, being lately supplied with one; but there was another printer in town, lately set up, one Keimer, who, perhaps, might employ me; if not, I should be welcome to lodge at his house, and he would give me a little work to do now and then till fuller business should offer.

The old gentleman said he would go with me to the new printer; and when we found him, "Neighbor," says Bradford, "I have brought to see you a young man of your business; perhaps you may want such a one." He asked me a few questions, put a composing-stick in my hand to see how I

worked, and then said he would employ me soon, though he had just then nothing for me to do; and, taking old Bradford, whom he had never seen before, to be one of the town's people that had a good will for him, entered into a conversation on his present undertaking and prospects; while Bradford, not discovering that he was the other printer's father, on Keimer's saying he expected soon to get the greatest part of the business into his own hands, drew him on by artful questions and starting little doubts, to explain all his views, what interest he relied on, and in what manner he intended to proceed. I, who stood by and heard all, saw immediately that one of them was a crafty old sophister, and the other a mere novice. Bradford left me with Keimer, who was greatly surprised when I told him who the old man was.

Keimer's printing-house, I found, consisted of an old shattered press, and one small, worn-out font of English, which he was then using himself, composing an Elegy on Aquila Rose, before mentioned, an ingenious young man, of excellent character, much respected in the town, clerk of the Assembly, and a pretty poet. Keimer made verses too, but very indifferently. He could not be said to write them, for his manner was to compose them in the types directly out of his head. So there being no copy, but one pair of cases, and the Elegy likely to require all the letter, no one could help him. I endeavored to put his press (which he had not yet used, and of which he understood nothing) into order fit to be worked with: and, promising to come and print off his Elegy as soon as he should have got it ready, I returned to Bradford's, who gave me a little job to do for the present, and there I lodged and dieted. A few days after, Keimer sent for me to print off the Elegy. And now he had got another pair of cases, and a pamphlet to reprint, on which he set me to work.

These two printers I found poorly qualified for their business. Bradford had not been bred to it, and was very illiterate; and Keimer, though something of a scholar, was a mere compositor, knowing nothing of press work. He had been one of the French prophets, and could act their enthusiastic agitations. At this time he did not profess any particular religion, but something of all on occasion; was very ignorant of the world, and had, as I afterward found, a good deal of the knave in his composition. He did not like my lodging at Bradford's while I worked with him. He had a house, indeed, but without furniture, so he could not lodge me; but he got me a lodging at Mr. Read's, before mentioned, who was the owner of his house; and, my chest and clothes being come by this time, I made rather a more respectable appearance in the eyes of Miss Read than I had done when she first happened to see me eating my roll in the street.

I began now to have some acquaintance among the young people of the town, that were lovers of reading, with whom I spent my evenings very pleasantly; and gaining money by my industry and frugality, I lived very agreeably, forgetting Boston as much as I could, and not desiring that any there should know where I resided, except my friend Collins, who was in my secret, and kept it when I wrote to him. At length, an incident happened that sent me back again much sooner than I had intended. I had a brother-in-law, Robert Holmes, master of a sloop that traded between Boston and Delaware. He being at Newcastle, forty miles below Philadelphia, heard there of me, and wrote me a letter mentioning the concern of my friends in Boston at my abrupt departure, assuring me of their good will to me, and that everything would be accommodated to my mind if I would return, to which he exhorted me very earnestly. I wrote an answer to his letter,

FRANKLIN IN KEIMER'S PRINTING-HOUSE

thanked him for his advice, but stated my reasons for quitting Boston fully, and in such a light as to convince him I was not so wrong as he had apprehended.

Sir William Keith, governor of the province, was then at Newcastle, and Captain Holmes, happening to be in company with him when my letter came to hand, spoke to him of me, and showed him the letter. The governor read it, and seemed surprised when he was told my age. He said I appeared a young man of promising parts, and therefore should be encouraged; the printers at Philadelphia were wretched ones; and, if I would set up there, he made no doubt I should succeed; for his part, he would procure me the public business, and do me every other service in his power. This, my brother-in-law afterwards told me in Boston, but I knew as yet nothing of it; when, one day, Keimer and I being at work together near the window, we saw the governor and another gentleman (who proved to be Colonel French, of Newcastle), finely dressed, come directly across the street to our house, and heard them at the door.

Keimer ran down immediately, thinking it a visit to him; but the governor inquired for me, came up, and with a condescension and politeness I had been quite unused to, made me many compliments, desired to be acquainted with me, blamed me kindly for not having made myself known to him when I first came to the place, and would have me away with him to the tavern, where he was going with Colonel French to taste, as he said, some excellent Madeira. I was not a little surprised, and Keimer stared like a pig poisoned. I went, however, with the governor and Colonel French to a tavern, at the corner of Third-street, and over the Madeira he proposed my setting up my business, laid before me the probabilities of success, and both he and Colonel French

assured me I should have their interest and influence in procuring the public business of both governments. On my doubting whether my father would assist me in it, Sir William said he would give me a letter to him, in which he would state the advantages, and he did not doubt of prevailing with him. So it was concluded I should return to Boston in the first vessel, with the governor's letter recommending me to my father. In the mean time the intention was to be kept a secret, and I went on working with Keimer as usual, the governor sending for me now and then to dine with him, a very great honor I thought it, and conversing with me in the most affable, familiar, and friendly manner imaginable.

## FRANKLIN VISITS BOSTON AND GOES TO ENGLAND

About the end of April, 1724, a little vessel offered for Boston. I took leave of Keimer as going to see my friends. The governor gave me an ample letter, saying many flattering things of me to my father, and strongly recommending the project of my setting up at Philadelphia as a thing that must make my fortune. We struck on a shoal in going down the bay, and sprung a leak; we had a blustering time at sea, and were obliged to pump almost continually, at which I took my turn. We arrived safe, however, at Boston in about a fortnight. I had been absent seven months, and my friends had heard nothing of me; for my brother-in-law Holmes was not yet returned, and had not written about me. My unexpected appearance surprised the family; all were, however, very glad to see me, and made me welcome, except my brother. I went to see him at his printing-house. I was better dressed than ever while in his service, having a genteel new suit from head to foot, a watch, and my pockets lined

with near five pounds sterling in silver. He received me not very frankly, looked me all over, and turned to his work again.

The journeymen were inquisitive where I had been, what sort of a country it was, and how I liked it. I praised it much, and the happy life I led in it, expressing strongly my intention of returning to it; and, one of them asking what kind of money we had there, I produced a handful of silver, and spread it before them, which was a kind of raree-show they had not been used to, paper being the money of Boston. Then I took an opportunity of letting them see my watch; and, lastly (my brother still grum and sullen), I gave them a piece of eight to drink, and took my leave. This visit of mine offended him extremely; for, when my mother some time after spoke to him of a reconciliation, and of her wishes to see us on good terms together, and that we might live for the future as brothers, he said I had insulted him in such a manner before his people that he could never forget or forgive it. In this, however, he was mistaken.

[It was while on this visit to his native place that young Franklin, then a lad of eighteen, went to see the Rev. Cotton Mather, the author of the little book which had such an influence on his life. Franklin says:—

He received me in his library, and on my taking leave showed me a shorter way out of the house through a narrow passage, which was crossed by a beam over head. We were still talking as I withdrew, he accompanying me behind, and I turning partly towards him, when he said hastily, "Stoop, stoop!" I did not understand him, till I felt my head hit against the beam. He was a man that never missed any occasion of giving instruction, and upon this he said to me, "You are young, and have the world before you; *stoop* as you go

through it, and you will miss many hard thumps." This advice, thus beat into my head, has frequently been of use to me; and I often think of it, when I see pride mortified, and misfortunes brought upon people by their carrying their heads too high.—(*Letter to Increase Mather.*)]

My father received the governor's letter with some apparent surprise, but said little of it to me for some days, when, Captain Holmes returning, he showed it to him, asked him if he knew Keith, and what kind of man he was: adding his opinion that he must be of small discretion to think of setting a boy up in business who wanted yet three years of being at man's estate. Holmes said what he could in favor of the project, but my father was clear in the impropriety of it, and at last gave a flat denial to it. Then he wrote a civil letter to Sir William, thanking him for the patronage he had so kindly offered me, but declining to assist me as yet in setting up, I being, in his opinion, too young to be trusted with the management of a business so important, and for which the preparation must be so expensive.

My friend and companion Collins, who was a clerk in the post-office, pleased with the account I gave him of my new country, determined to go thither also; and, while I waited for my father's determination, he set out before me by land to Rhode Island, leaving his books, which were a pretty collection of mathematics and natural philosophy, to come with mine and me to New York, where he proposed to wait for me.

My father, though he did not approve Sir William's proposition, was yet pleased that I had been able to obtain so advantageous a character from a person of such note where I had resided, and that I had been so industrious and careful as to equip myself so handsomely in so short a time; therefore, seeing no prospect of an accommodation between my

brother and me, he gave his consent to my returning again to Philadelphia, advised me to behave respectfully to the people there, endeavor to obtain the general esteem, and avoid lampooning and libelling, to which he thought I had too much inclination; telling me, that by steady industry and a prudent parsimony I might save enough by the time I was one-and-twenty to set me up; and that, if I came near the matter, he would help me out with the rest. This was all I could obtain, except some small gifts as tokens of his and my mother's love, when I embarked again for New York, now with their approbation and their blessing.

The sloop putting in at Newport, Rhode Island, I visited my brother John, who had been married and settled there some years. He received me very affectionately, for he always loved me. A friend of his, one Vernon, having some money due to him in Pennsylvania, about thirty-five pounds currency, desired I would receive it for him, and keep it till I had his directions what to remit it in. Accordingly, he gave me an order. This afterwards occasioned me a good deal of uneasiness.

At Newport we took in a number of passengers for New York, among whom were two young people, companions, and a grave, sensible, matron-like Quaker woman, with her attendants. I had shown an obliging readiness to do her some little services, which impressed her I suppose with a degree of good will toward me; therefore, when she saw a daily growing familiarity between me and the two young people, she took me aside, and said, "Young man, I am concerned for thee, as thou has no friend with thee, and seems not to know much of the world, or of the snares youth is exposed to; depend upon it, those are very bad characters; I can see it in all their actions; and if thee art not upon thy guard, they will draw

thee into some danger; they are strangers to thee, and I advise thee, in a friendly concern for thy welfare, to have no acquaintance with them." As I seemed at first not to think so ill of them as she did, she mentioned some things she had observed and heard that had escaped my notice, but now convinced me she was right. I thanked her for her kind advice, and promised to follow it. When we arrived at New York, they told me where they lived, and invited me to come and see them: but I avoided it, and it was well I did; for the next day the captain missed a silver spoon and some other things, that had been taken out of his cabin, and, knowing that these were a couple of thieves, he got a warrant to search their lodgings, found the stolen goods, and had them punished. So, though we had escaped a sunken rock, which we scraped upon in the passage, I thought this escape of rather more importance to me.

At New York I found my friend Collins, who had arrived there some time before me. We had been intimate from children, and had read the same books together; but he had the advantage of more time for reading and studying, and a wonderful genius for mathematical learning, in which he far outstripped me. While I lived in Boston, most of my hours of leisure for conversation were spent with him, and he continued a sober as well as an industrious lad; was much respected for his learning by several of the clergy and other gentlemen, and seemed to promise making a good figure in life. But, during my absence, he had acquired a habit of sotting with brandy; and I found by his own account, and what I heard from others, that he had been drunk every day since his arrival at New York, and behaved very oddly. He had gamed, too, and lost his money, so that I was obliged to discharge his lodgings, and defray his expenses to and at Philadelphia, which proved extremely inconvenient to me.

The then governor of New York, Burnet (son of Bishop Burnet), hearing from the captain that a young man, one of his passengers, had a great many books, desired he would bring me to see him. I waited upon him accordingly, and should have taken Collins with me but that he was not sober. The governor treated me with great civility, showed me his library, which was a very large one, and we had a good deal of conversation about books and authors. This was the second governor who had done me the honor to take notice of me; which, to a poor boy like me, was very pleasing.

We proceeded to Philadelphia. I received on the way Vernon's money, without which we could hardly have finished our journey. Collins wished to be employed in some counting-house; but, whether they discovered his dramming by his breath or by his behavior, though he had some recommendations, he met with no success in any application, and continued lodging and boarding at the same house with me, and at my expense. Knowing I had that money of Vernon's he was continually borrowing of me, still promising repayment as soon as he should be in business. At length he had got so much of it that I was distressed to think what I should do in case of being called on to remit it.

His drinking continued, about which we sometimes quarreled; for when a little intoxicated, he was very fractious. Once, in a boat on the Delaware with some other young men, he refused to row in his turn. "I will be rowed home," says he. "We will not row you," says I. "You must, or stay all night on the water," says he, "just as you please." The others said, "Let us row; what signifies it?" But, my mind being soured with his other conduct, I continued to refuse. So he swore he would make me row, or throw me overboard; and coming along, stepping on the thwarts toward me, when he

came up and struck at me, I clapped my hand under him, and, rising, pitched him head-foremost into the river. I knew he was a good swimmer, and so was under little concern about him; but before he could get round to lay hold of the boat, we had with a few strokes pulled her out of his reach: and ever when he drew near the boat we asked if he would row, striking a few strokes to slide her away from him. He was ready to die with vexation, and obstinately would not promise to row. However, seeing him at last beginning to tire, we lifted him in and brought him home dripping wet in the evening. We hardly exchanged a civil word afterwards, and a West India captain, who had a commission to procure a tutor for the sons of a gentleman at Barbadoes, happening to meet with him, agreed to carry him thither. He left me then, promising to remit me the first money he should receive in order to discharge the debt; but I never heard of him after.

The breaking into this money of Vernon's was one of the first great errata of my life; and this affair showed that my father was not much out in his judgment when he supposed me too young to manage business of importance. But Sir William, on reading his letter, said he was too prudent. There was a great difference in persons; and discretion did not always accompany years, nor was youth always without it. "And since he will not set you up," says he, "I will do it myself. Give me an inventory of the things necessary to be had from England, and I will send for them. You shall repay me when you are able: I am resolved to have a good printer here, and I am sure you must succeed." This was spoken with such an appearance of cordiality, that I had not the least doubt of his meaning what he said. I had hitherto kept the proposition of my setting up, a secret in Philadelphia, and I still kept it. Had it been known that I depended

on the governor, probably some friend, that knew him better, would have advised me not to rely on him, as I afterwards heard it as his known character to be liberal of promises which he never meant to keep. Yet, unsolicited as he was by me, how could I think his generous offers insincere? I believed him one of the best men in the world.

I presented him an inventory of a little printing-house, amounting by my computation to about one hundred pounds sterling. He liked it, but asked me if my being on the spot in England to choose the types, and see that every thing was good of the kind, might not be of some advantage. "Then," says he, "when there, you may make acquaintances, and establish correspondences in the bookselling and stationery way." I agreed that this might be advantageous. "Then," says he, "get yourself ready to go with Annis;" which was the annual ship, and the only one at that time usually passing between London and Philadelphia. But it would be some months before Annis sailed, so I continued working with Keimer, fretting about the money Collins had got from me, and in daily apprehensions of being called upon by Vernon, which, however, did not happen for some years after.

I believe I have omitted mentioning that, in my first voyage from Boston, being becalmed off Block Island, our people set about catching cod, and hauled up a great many. Hitherto I had stuck to my resolution of not eating animal food, and on this occasion I considered, with my master Tryon, the taking every fish as a kind of unprovoked murder, since none of them had, or ever could do us any injury that might justify the slaughter. All this seemed very reasonable. But I had formerly been a great lover of fish, and, when this came hot out of the frying-pan, it smelt admirably well. I balanced some time between principle and inclination, till I recollected that,

when the fish were opened, I saw smaller fish taken out of their stomachs; then thought I, "If you eat one another, I don't see why we mayn't eat you." So I dined upon cod very heartily, and continued to eat with other people, returning only now and then occasionally to a vegetable diet. So convenient a thing it is to be a *reasonable creature*, since it enables one to find or make a reason for every thing one has a mind to do.

Keimer and I lived on a pretty good familiar footing, and agreed tolerably well, for he suspected nothing of my setting up. He retained a great deal of his old enthusiasms and loved argumentation. We therefore had many disputations. I used to work him so with my Socratic method, and had trepanned him so often by questions apparently so distant from any point we had in hand, and yet by degrees lead to the point, and brought him into difficulties and contradictions, that at last he grew ridiculously cautious, and would hardly answer me the most common question, without asking first, "*What do you intend to infer from that?*" However, it gave him so high an opinion of my abilities in the confuting way, that he seriously proposed my being his colleague in a project he had of setting up a new sect. He was to preach the doctrines, and I was to confound all opponents. When he came to explain with me upon the doctrines, I found several conundrums which I objected to, unless I might have my way a little too, and introduce some of mine.

Keimer wore his beard at full length, because somewhere in the Mosaic law it said, "*Thou shalt not mar the corners of thy beard.*" [Leviticus xix. 27.] He likewise kept the Seventh day, Sabbath; and these two points were essentials with him. I disliked both; but agreed to admit them upon condition of his adopting the doctrine of using no animal food. "I doubt," said he, "my constitution will not bear

that." I assured him it would, and that he would be the better for it. He was usually a great glutton, and I promised myself some diversion in half starving him. He agreed to try the practice, if I would keep him company. I did so, and we held it for three months. We had our victuals dressed, and brought to us regularly by a woman in the neighborhood, who had from me a list of forty dishes, to be prepared for us at different times, in all which there was neither fish, flesh, nor fowl, and the whim suited me the better at this time from the cheapness of it, not costing us above eighteen pence sterling each per week. I have since kept several Lents most strictly, leaving the common diet for that, and that for the common, abruptly, without the least inconvenience, so that I think there is little in the advice of making those changes by easy gradations. I went on pleasantly, but poor Keimer suffered grievously, tired of the project, longed for the flesh-pots of Egypt, and ordered a roast pig. He invited me and two women friends to dine with him; but, it being brought too soon upon the table, he could not resist the temptation, and ate the whole before we came.

I had made some courtship during this time to Miss Read. I had a great respect and affection for her, and had some reason to believe she had the same for me; but, as I was about to take a long voyage, and we were both very young, only a little above eighteen, it was thought most prudent by her mother to prevent our going too far at present, as a marriage, if it was to take place, would be more convenient after my return, when I should be, as I expected, set up in my business. Perhaps, too, she thought my expectations not so well founded as I imagined them to be.

My chief acquaintances at this time were Charles Osborne, Joseph Watson, and James Ralph, all lovers of reading. The

two first were clerks to an eminent scrivener or conveyancer in the town, Charles Brockden; the other was clerk to a merchant. Watson was a pious, sensible young man, of great integrity; the others rather more lax in their principles of religion, particularly Ralph, who, as well as Collins, had been unsettled by me, for which they both made me suffer. Osborne was sensible, candid, frank; sincere and affectionate to his friends; but, in literary matters, too fond of criticising. Ralph was ingenious, genteel in his manners, and extremely eloquent; I think I never knew a prettier talker. Both of them great admirers of poetry, and began to try their hands in little pieces. Many pleasant walks we four had together on Sundays into the woods, near Schuylkill, where we read to one another, and conferred on what we read.

Ralph was inclined to pursue the study of poetry, not doubting but he might become eminent in it, and make his fortune by it, alleging that the best poets must, when they first began to write, make as many faults as he did. Osborne dissuaded him, assured him he had no genius for poetry, and advised him to think of nothing beyond the business he was bred to; that, in the mercantile way, though he had no stock, he might, by his diligence and punctuality, recommend himself to employment as a factor, and in time acquire wherewith to trade on his own account. I approved the amusing one's self with poetry now and then, so far as to improve one's language, but no further.

On this it was proposed that we should each of us, at our next meeting, produce a piece of his own composing, in order to improve by our mutual observations, criticisms, and corrections. As language and expression were what we had in view, we excluded all considerations of invention by agreeing that the task should be a version of the eighteenth Psalm,

which describes the descent of a Deity. When the time of our meeting drew nigh, Ralph called on me first, and let me know his piece was ready. I told him I had been busy, and, having little inclination, had done nothing. He then showed me his piece for my opinion, and I much approved it, as it appeared to me to have great merit. "Now," says he, "Osborne never will allow the least merit in any thing of mine, but makes a thousand criticisms out of mere envy. He is not so jealous of you; I wish, therefore, you would take this piece, and produce it as yours; I will pretend not to have had time, and so produce nothing. We shall then see what he will say to it." It was agreed, and I immediately transcribed it, that it might appear in my own hand.

We met; Watson's performance was read; there were some beauties in it, but many defects. Osborne's was read; it was much better; Ralph did it justice; remarked some faults, but applauded the beauties. He himself had nothing to produce. I was backward; seemed desirous of being excused; had not had sufficient time to correct, etc.; but no excuse could be admitted; produce I must. It was read and repeated; Watson and Osborne gave up the contest, and joined in applauding it. Ralph only made some criticisms and proposed some amendments; but I defended my text. Osborne was against Ralph, and told him he was no better a critic than poet; so he dropped the argument. As they two went home together, Osborne expressed himself still more strongly in favor of what he thought my production; having restrained himself before, as he said, lest I should think it flattery. "But who would have imagined," said he, "that Franklin had been capable of such a performance! such painting, such force, such fire! He has even improved the original. In his common conversation he seems to have no choice of

words; he hesitates and blunders: and yet, good Heavens! how he writes!" When we next met, Ralph discovered the trick we had played him, and Osborne was a little laughed at. This transaction fixed Ralph in his resolution of becoming a poet. I did all I could to dissuade him from it; but he continued scribbling verses till *Pope* cured him. He became, however, a pretty good prose writer. More of him hereafter. But, as I may not have occasion again to mention the other two, I shall just remark here that Watson died in my arms a few years after, much lamented, being the best of our set. Osborne went to the West Indies, where he became an eminent lawyer and made money, but died young. He and I had made a serious agreement, that the one who happened first to die should, if possible, make a friendly visit to the other, and acquaint him how he found things in that separate state; but he never fulfilled his promise.

The governor, seeming to like my company, had me frequently to his house; and his setting me up was always mentioned as a fixed thing. I was to take with me letters recommendatory to a number of his friends, besides the letter of credit to furnish me with the necessary money for purchasing the press and types, paper, etc. For these letters I was appointed to call at different times, when they were to be ready; but a future time was still named. Thus he went on till the ship, whose departure, too, had been several times postponed, was on the point of sailing. Then, when I called to take my leave and receive the letters, his secretary, Dr. Baird, came out to me and said the governor was extremely busy in writing, but would be down at Newcastle before the ship, and there the letters would be delivered to me.

Ralph, though married, and having one child, had determined to accompany me in this voyage. It was thought he

intended to establish a correspondence, and obtain goods to sell on commission; but I found afterwards that through some discontent with his wife's relations, he proposed to leave her on their hands and never return again. Having taken leave of my friends, and interchanged some promises with Miss Read, I left Philadelphia in the ship, which anchored at Newcastle. The governor was there; but when I went to his lodging, the secretary came to me from him with the civillest message in the world, that he could not then see me, being engaged in business of the utmost importance, but should send the letters to me on board, wished me heartily a good voyage and a speedy return, etc. I returned on board a little puzzled, but still not doubting.

Mr. Andrew Hamilton, a famous lawyer of Philadelphia, had taken passage in the same ship for himself and son, and with Mr. Denham, a Quaker merchant, and Messrs. Onion and Russel, masters of an iron work in Maryland, had engaged the great cabin; so that Ralph and I were forced to take up with a berth in the steerage, and, none on board knowing us, were considered as ordinary persons. But Mr. Hamilton and his son (it was James, since governor) returned from Newcastle to Philadelphia, the father being recalled by a great fee to plead for a seized ship; and, just before we sailed, Colonel French coming on board, and showing me great respect, I was more taken notice of, and, with my friend Ralph, invited by the other gentlemen to come into the cabin, there being now room. Accordingly, we removed thither.

Understanding that Colonel French had brought on board the governor's dispatches, I asked the captain for those letters that were to be under my care. He said all were put into the bag together and he could not then come at them; but before we landed in England, I should have an opportunity

of picking them out. So I was satisfied for the present, and we proceeded on our voyage. We had a sociable company in the cabin, and lived uncommonly well, having the addition of all Mr. Hamilton's stores, who had laid in plentifully. In this passage Mr. Denham contracted a friendship for me that continued during his life. The voyage was otherwise not a pleasant one, as we had a great deal of bad weather.

When we came into the Channel, the captain kept his word with me, and gave me an opportunity of examining the bag for the governor's letters. I found none upon which my name was put as under my care. I picked out six or seven that, by the hand-writing, I thought might be the promised letters, especially as one of them was directed to Basket, the king's printer, and another to some stationer. We arrived in London the 24th of December, 1724. I waited upon the stationer, who came first in my way, delivering the letter as from Governor Keith. "I don't know such a person," says he; but, opening the letter, "Oh! this is from Riddlesden. I have lately found him to be a complete rascal, and I will have nothing to do with him, nor receive any letters from him." So, putting the letter into my hand, he turned on his heel, and left me to serve some customer. I was surprised to find these were not the governor's letters; and, after recollecting and comparing circumstances, I began to doubt his sincerity. I found my friend Denham, and opened the whole affair to him. He let me into Keith's character; told me there was not the least probability that he had written any letters for me; that no one who knew him had the smallest dependence on him; and he laughed at the notion of the governor's giving me a letter of credit, having, as he said, no credit to give. On my expressing some concern about what I should do, he advised me to endeavor getting some employment in the way of my busi-

ness. "Among the printers here," said he, "you will improve yourself, and when you return to America, you will set up to greater advantage."

We both of us happened to know, as well as the stationer, that Riddlesden, the attorney, was a very knave. He had half ruined Miss Read's father by persuading him to be bound for him. By this letter it appeared there was a secret scheme on foot to the prejudice of Hamilton (supposed to be then coming over with us); and that Keith was concerned in it with Riddlesden. Denham, who was a friend of Hamilton's, thought he ought to be acquainted with it; so, when he arrived in England, which was soon after, partly from resentment and ill-will to Keith and Riddlesden, and partly from good-will to him, I waited on him, and gave him the letter. He thanked me cordially, the information being of importance to him; and from that time he became my friend, greatly to my advantage afterwards on many occasions.

But what shall we think of a governor's playing such pitiful tricks, and imposing so grossly on a poor ignorant boy! It was a habit he had acquired. He wished to please everybody; and, having little to give, he gave expectations. He was otherwise an ingenious, sensible man, a pretty good writer, and a good governor for the people, though not for his constituents, the proprietaries, whose instructions he sometimes disregarded. Several of our best laws were of his planning and passed during his administration.

Ralph and I were inseparable companions. We took lodgings together in Little Britain at three shillings and sixpence a week—as much as we could then afford. He found some relations, but they were poor, and unable to assist him. He now let me know his intentions of remaining in London, and that he never meant to return to Philadelphia. He had

brought no money with him, the whole he could muster having been expended in paying his passage. I had fifteen pistoles; so he borrowed occasionally of me to subsist, while he was looking out for business. He first endeavored to get into the playhouse, believing himself qualified for an actor; but Wilkes, to whom he applied, advised him candidly not to think of that employment, as it was impossible he should succeed in it. Then he proposed to Roberts, a publisher in Paternoster Row, to write for him a weekly paper like the Spectator, on certain conditions, which Roberts did not approve. Then he endeavored to get employment as a hackney writer, to copy for the stationers and lawyers about the Temple, but could find no vacancy.

I immediately got into work at Palmer's, then a famous printing-house in Bartholomew Close, and here I continued near a year. I was pretty diligent, but spent with Ralph a good deal of my earnings in going to plays and other places of amusement. We had together consumed all my pistoles, and now just rubbed on from hand to mouth. He seemed quite to forget his wife and child, and I, by degrees, my engagements with Miss Read, to whom I never wrote more than one letter, and that was to let her know I was not likely soon to return. This was another of the great errata of my life, which I should wish to correct if I were to live it over again. In fact, by our expenses, I was constantly kept unable to pay my passage.

At Palmer's I was employed in composing for the second edition of Wollaston's "Religion of Nature." Some of his reasonings not appearing to me well founded, I wrote a little metaphysical piece in which I made remarks on them. It was entitled "A Dissertation on Liberty and Necessity, Pleasure and Pain." I inscribed it to my friend Ralph; I

printed a small number. It occasioned my being more considered by Mr. Palmer as a young man of some ingenuity, though he seriously expostulated with me upon the principles of my pamphlet, which to him appeared abominable. My printing this pamphlet was another erratum. While I lodged in Little Britain, I made an acquaintance with one Wilcox, a bookseller, whose shop was at the next door. He had an immense collection of second-hand books. Circulating libraries were not then in use; but we agreed that, on certain reasonable terms, which I have now forgotten, I might take, read, and return any of his books. This I esteemed a great advantage, and I made as much use of it as I could.

My pamphlet by some means falling into the hands of one Lyons, a surgeon, author of a book entitled "The Infallibility of Human Judgment," it occasioned an acquaintance between us. He took great notice of me, called on me often to converse on those subjects, carried me to the Horns, a pale-alehouse in —— Lane, Cheapside, and introduced me to Dr. Mandeville, author of the "Fable of the Bees," who had a club there, of which he was the soul, being a most facetious, entertaining companion. Lyons, too, introduced me to Dr. Pemberton, at Batson's Coffee-house, who promised to give me an opportunity, some time or other, of seeing Sir Isaac Newton, of which I was extremely desirous; but this never happened.

I had brought over a few curiosities, among which the principal was a purse made of the asbestos, which purifies by fire. Sir Hans Sloane heard of it, came to see me, and invited me to his house in Bloomsbury Square, where he showed me all his curiosities, and persuaded me to let him add that to the number, for which he paid me handsomely.

My friend Ralph being still out of business, took a resolution of going from London, to try for a country school,

which he thought himself well qualified to undertake, as he wrote an excellent hand, and was a master of arithmetic and accounts. This, however, he deemed a business below him, and, confident of future better fortune, when he should be unwilling to have it known that he was once so meanly employed, he changed his name, and did me the honor to assume mine; for I soon after had a letter from him, acquainting me that he was settled in a small village (in Berkshire, I think it was, where he taught reading and writing to ten or a dozen boys, at sixpence each per week), and desiring me to write to him, directing to Mr. Franklin, schoolmaster at such a place.

He continued to write frequently, sending me large specimens of an epic poem which he was then composing, and desiring my remarks and corrections. These I gave him from time to time, but endeavored rather to discourage his proceeding. One of Young's Satires was then just published. I copied and sent him a great part of it, which set in a strong light the folly of pursuing the Muses with any hope of advancement by them. All was in vain; sheets of the poem continued to come by every post. Certain circumstances now occurred which made a breach between us; and when he returned again to London, he let me know he thought I had canceled all the obligations he had been under to me. So I found I was never to expect his repaying me what I lent to him, or advanced for him. This, however, was not then of much consequence, as he was totally unable; and in the loss of his friendship I found myself relieved from a burden. I now began to think of getting a little money before hand, and, expecting better work, I left Palmer's to work at Watts's, near Lincoln's Inn Fields, a still greater printing-house. Here I continued all the rest of my stay in London.

At my first admission into this printing-house I took to

working at press, imagining I felt a want of the bodily exercise I had been used to in America, where presswork is mixed with composing. I drank only water; the other workmen, near fifty in number, were great guzzlers of beer. On occasion, I carried up and down stairs a large form of types in each hand, when others carried but one in both hands. They wondered to see, from this and several instances, that the *Water-American*, as they called me, was *stronger* than themselves, who drank *strong* beer! We had an alehouse boy who attended always in the house to supply the workmen. My companion at the press drank every day a pint before breakfast, a pint at breakfast with his bread and cheese, a pint between breakfast and dinner, a pint at dinner, a pint in the afternoon about six o'clock, and another when he had done his day's work. I thought it a detestable custom; but it was necessary, he supposed, to drink *strong* beer that he might be *strong* to labor. I endeavored to convince him that the bodily strength afforded by beer could only be in proportion to the grain or flour of the barley dissolved in the water of which it was made; that there was more flour in a pennyworth of bread; and therefore, if he would eat that with a pint of water, it would give him more strength than a quart of beer. He drank on, however, and had four or five shillings to pay out of his wages every Saturday night for that muddling liquor, an expense I was free from. And thus these poor wretches keep themselves always under.

Watts, after some weeks, desiring to have me in the composing-room, I left the pressmen; a new sum for drink, being five shillings, was demanded of me by the compositors. I thought it an imposition, as I had paid below; the master thought so too, and forbade my paying it. I stood out two or three weeks, was accordingly considered as an excom-

municate, and had so many little pieces of private mischief done me, by mixing my sorts, transposing my pages, breaking my matter, etc., etc., if I were ever so little out of the room, and all ascribed to the chapel ghost, which they said ever haunted those not regularly admitted, that, notwithstanding the master's protection, I found myself obliged to comply and pay the money, convinced of the folly of being on ill terms with those one is to live with continually.

I was now on a fair footing with them, and soon acquired considerable influence. I proposed some reasonable alterations in their chapel laws, and carried them against all opposition. From my example, a great part of them left their muddling breakfast of beer, and bread, and cheese, finding that they could with me be supplied from a neighboring house with a large porringer of hot water-gruel, sprinkled with pepper, crumbed with bread, and a bit of butter in it, for the price of a pint of beer, viz.: three halfpence. This was a more comfortable as well as cheaper breakfast, and kept their heads clearer. Those who continued sotting with beer all day, were often, by not paying, out of credit at the alehouse, and used to make interest with me to get beer; their *light* as they phrased it, *being out*. I watched the pay-table on Saturday night, and collected what I stood engaged for them, having to pay sometimes near thirty shillings a week on their accounts. This, and my being esteemed a pretty good *riggite*, that is, a jocular verbal satirist, supported my consequence in the society. My constant attendance (I never making a St. Monday) recommended me to the master; and my uncommon quickness at composing occasioned my being put upon all work of dispatch, which was generally better paid. So I went on now very agreeably.

My lodging in Little Britain being too remote, I found

another in Duke-street, opposite to the Romish Chapel. It was two pair of stairs backwards, at an Italian warehouse. A widow lady kept the house; she had a daughter, and a maid servant, and a journeyman who attended the warehouse, but lodged abroad. After sending to inquire my character at the house where I last lodged, she agreed to take me in at the same rate, 3s. 6d. per week; cheaper, as she said, from the protection she expected in having a man lodge in the house. She was an elderly woman; had been bred a Protestant, being a clergyman's daughter, but was converted to the Catholic religion by her husband, whose memory she much revered; had lived much among people of distinction, and knew a thousand anecdotes of them as far back as the times of Charles the Second. She was lame in her knees with the gout, and, therefore, seldom stirred out of her room, so sometimes wanted company; and hers was so highly amusing to me, that I was sure to spend an evening with her whenever she desired it. Our supper was only half an anchovy each, on a very little strip of bread and butter, and half a pint of ale between us; but the entertainment was in her conversation. My always keeping good hours, and giving little trouble in the family, made her unwilling to part with me; so that, when I talked of a lodging I had heard of, nearer my business, for two shillings a week, which, intent as I now was on saving money, made some difference, she bid me not think of it, for she would abate me two shillings a week for the future; so I remained with her at one shilling and sixpence as long as I stayed in London.

In a garret of her house there lived a maiden lady of seventy, in a most retired manner, of whom my landlady gave me this account: that she was a Roman Catholic, had been sent abroad when young, and lodged in a nunnery with an

intent of becoming a nun; but, the country not agreeing with her, she returned to England, where, there being no nunnery, she had vowed to lead the life of a nun, as near as might be done in those circumstances. Accordingly, she had given all her estate to charitable uses, reserving only twelve pounds a year to live on, and out of this sum she still gave a great deal in charity, living herself on water-gruel only, and using no fire but to boil it. She had lived many years in that garret, being permitted to remain there gratis by successive Catholic tenants of the house below, as they deemed it a blessing to have her there. A priest visited her to confess her every day. "I have asked her," says my landlady, "how she, as she lived, could possibly find so much employment for a confessor?" "Oh," said she, "it is impossible to avoid *vain thoughts*." I was once permitted to visit her. She was cheerful and polite, and conversed pleasantly. The room was clean, but had no other furniture than a mattress, a table with a crucifix and book, a stool which she gave me to sit on, and a picture over the chimney of Saint Veronica displaying her handkerchief, with a miraculous figure of Christ's bleeding face on it, which she explained to me with great seriousness. She looked pale, but was never sick; and I give it as another instance on how small an income life and health may be supported.

At Watts's printing-house I contracted an acquaintance with an ingenious young man, one Wygate, who, having wealthy relations, had been better educated than most printers; was a tolerable Latinist, spoke French, and loved reading. I taught him and a friend of his to swim, at twice going into the river, and they soon became good swimmers. They introduced me to some gentlemen from the country, who went to Chelsea by water to see the College and Don Saltero's curiosities. In our return, at the request of the com-

pany, whose curiosity Wygate had excited, I stripped and leaped into the river, and swam from near Chelsea to Blackfriars', performing on the way many feats of activity, both upon and under water, that surprised and pleased those to whom they were novelties.

I had from a child been ever delighted with this exercise, had studied and practiced all Thévenot's motions and positions, added some of my own, aiming at the graceful and easy as well as the useful. All these I took this occasion of exhibiting to the company, and was much flattered by their admiration; and Wygate, who was desirous of becoming a master, grew more and more attached to me on that account, as well as from the similarity of our studies. He at length proposed to me traveling all over Europe together, supporting ourselves everywhere by working at our business. I was once inclined to it; but, mentioning it to my good friend Mr. Denham, with whom I often spent an hour when I had leisure, he dissuaded me from it, advising me to think only of returning to Pennsylvania, which he was now about to do.

I must record one trait of this good man's character. He had formerly been in business at Bristol, but failed, in debt to a number of people, compounded and went to America. There, by a close application to business as a merchant, he acquired a plentiful fortune in a few years. Returning to England in the ship with me, he invited his old creditors to an entertainment, at which he thanked them for the easy composition they had favored him with, and, when they expected nothing but the treat, every man at the first remove found under his plate an order on a banker for the full amount of the unpaid remainder with interest.

He now told me he was about to return to Philadelphia, and should carry over a great quantity of goods in order to

open a store there. He proposed to take me over as his clerk, to keep his books, in which he would instruct me, copy his letters, and attend the store. He added that, as soon as I should be acquainted with mercantile business, he would promote me by sending me with a cargo of flour and bread, etc., to the West Indies, and procure me commissions from others which would be profitable; and, if I managed well, would establish me handsomely. The thing pleased me: for I was grown tired of London, remembered with pleasure the happy months I had spent in Pennsylvania, and wished again to see it. Therefore I immediately agreed on the terms of fifty pounds a year, Pennsylvania money: less, indeed, than my present gettings as a compositor, but affording a better prospect.

I now took leave of printing, as I thought, forever, and was daily employed in my new business, going about with Mr. Denham among the tradesmen to purchase various articles, and seeing them packed up, doing errands, calling upon workmen to dispatch, etc.; and, when all was on board, I had a few days' leisure. On one of these days, I was, to my surprise, sent for by a great man I knew only by name, a Sir William Wyndham, and I waited upon him. He had heard by some means or other of my swimming from Chelsea to Blackfriars', and of my teaching Wygate and another young man to swim in a few hours. He had two sons about to set out on their travels; he wished to have them first taught swimming, and proposed to gratify me handsomely if I would teach them. They were not yet come to town, and my stay was uncertain, so I could not undertake it; but, from this incident, I thought it likely that if I were to remain in England and open a swimming-school, I might get a good deal of money; and it struck me so strongly, that, had the offer

been sooner made me, probably I should not so soon have returned to America. After many years, you and I had something of more importance to do with one of these sons of Sir William Wyndham, become Earl of Egremont, which I shall mention in its place.

Thus I spent about eighteen months in London; most part of the time I worked hard at my business, and spent but little upon myself except in seeing plays and in books. My friend Ralph had kept me poor; he owed me about twenty-seven pounds, which I was now never likely to receive,—a great sum out of my small earnings! I loved him notwithstanding, for he had many amiable qualities. I had by no means improved my fortune: but I had picked up some very ingenious acquaintance, whose conversation was of great advantage to me; and I had read considerably.

## FRANKLIN RETURNS TO PHILADELPHIA AND SETS UP BUSINESS FOR HIMSELF

We sailed from Gravesend on the 23d of July, 1726. For the incidents of the voyage, I refer you to my Journal, where you will find them all minutely related. Perhaps the most important part of that journal is the *plan* to be found in it, which I formed at sea, for regulating my future conduct in life. It is the more remarkable, as being formed when I was so young, and yet being pretty faithfully adhered to quite through to old age.

[Franklin's Journal shows that the ten weeks' voyage had become so irksome that at last he began to question whether they should ever finish it. "For my part," he says, "I know not what to think of it. . . . Sure the American continent is not all sunk under water since we left it?" But on Sunday

Oct. 9, "the long wished for sound LAND! LAND!" was heard. "In less than an hour we could descry it from the deck, appearing like tufts of trees. I could not discern it so soon as the rest; my eyes were dimmed with the suffusion of two small drops of joy."]

We landed in Philadelphia on the 11th of October, where I found sundry alterations. Keith was no longer governor, being superseded by Major Gordon. I met him walking the streets as a common citizen. He seemed a little ashamed at seeing me, but passed without saying any thing. I should have been as much ashamed at seeing Miss Read, had not her friends, despairing with reason of my return after the receipt of my letter, persuaded her to marry another, one Rogers, a potter, which was done in my absence. With him, however, she was never happy, and soon parted from him, refusing to bear his name, it being now said that he had another wife. He was a worthless fellow, though an excellent workman, which was the temptation to her friends. He got into debt, ran away in 1727 or 1728, went to the West Indies, and died there. Keimer had got a better house, a shop well supplied with stationery, plenty of new types, a number of hands, though none good, and seemed to have a great deal of business.

Mr. Denham took a store in Water-street, where we opened our goods; I attended the business diligently, studied accounts, and grew, in a little time, expert at selling. We lodged and boarded together; he counseled me as a father, having a sincere regard for me. I respected and loved him, and we might have gone on together very happy; but, in the beginning of February, 1727, when I had just passed my twenty-first year, we both were taken ill. My distemper was a pleurisy, which very nearly carried me off. I suffered a good deal,

gave up the point in my own mind, and was rather disappointed when I found myself recovering, regretting, in some degree, that I must now, some time or other, have all that disagreeable work to do over again. I forget what his distemper was; it held him a long time, and at length carried him off. He left me a small legacy in a nuncupative will, as a token of his kindness for me, and he left me once more to the wide world; for the store was taken into the care of his executors, and my employment under him ended.

My brother-in-law, Holmes, being now at Philadelphia, advised my return to my business; and Keimer tempted me, with an offer of large wages by the year, to come and take the management of his printing-house, that he might better attend his stationer's shop. I had heard a bad character of him in London from his wife and her friends, and was not fond of having any more to do with him. I tried for further employment as a merchant's clerk; but, not readily meeting with any, I closed again with Keimer. I found in his house these hands: Hugh Meredith, a Welsh Pennsylvanian, thirty years of age, bred to country work; honest, sensible, had a great deal of solid observation, was something of a reader, but given to drink. Stephen Potts, a young countryman of full age, bred to the same, of uncommon natural parts, and great wit and humor, but a little idle. These he had agreed with at extremely low wages per week, to be raised a shilling every three months, as they would deserve by improving in their business; and the expectation of these high wages, to come on hereafter, was what he had drawn them in with. Meredith was to work at press, Potts at book-binding, which he, by agreement, was to teach them, though he knew neither one nor the other. John ——, a wild Irishman, brought up to no business, whose service, for four years, Keimer had pur-

chased from the captain of a ship; he, too, was to be made a pressman. George Webb, an Oxford scholar, whose time for four years he had likewise bought, intending him for a compositor, of whom more presently; and David Harry, a country boy, whom he had taken apprentice.

I soon perceived that the intention of engaging me at wages so much higher than he had been used to give, was to have these raw, cheap hands formed through me; and, as soon as I had instructed them, then they being all articled to him, he should be able to do without me. I went on, however, very cheerfully, put his printing-house in order, which had been in great confusion, and brought his hands by degrees to mind their business and to do it better.

It was an odd thing to find an Oxford scholar in the situation of a bought servant. He was not more than eighteen years of age, and gave me this account of himself: that he was born in Gloucester, educated at a grammar-school there, had been distinguished among the scholars for some apparent superiority in performing his part, when they exhibited plays; belonged to the Witty Club there, and had written some pieces in prose and verse, which were printed in the Gloucester newspapers; thence he was sent to Oxford, where he continued about a year, but not well satisfied, wishing of all things to see London, and become a player. At length, receiving his quarterly allowance of fifteen guineas, instead of discharging his debts, he walked out of town, hid his gown in a furze bush, and footed it to London, where, having no friend to advise him, he fell into bad company, soon spent his guineas, found no means of being introduced among the players, grew necessitous, pawned his clothes, and wanted bread. Walking the street very hungry, and not knowing what to do with himself, a crimp's bill was put into his hand, offer-

ing immediate entertainment and encouragement to such as would bind themselves to serve in America. He went directly, signed the indentures, was put into the ship, and came over, never writing a line to acquaint his friends what was become of him. He was lively, witty, good-natured, and a pleasant companion, but idle, thoughtless, and imprudent to the last degree.

John, the Irishman, soon ran away; with the rest I began to live very agreeably, for they all respected me the more, as they found Keimer incapable of instructing them, and that from me they learned something daily. We never worked on Saturday, that being Keimer's Sabbath, so I had two days for reading. My acquaintance with ingenious people in the town increased. Keimer himself treated me with great civility and apparent regard, and nothing now made me uneasy but my debt to Vernon, which I was yet unable to pay, being hitherto but a poor economist. He, however, kindly made no demand of it.

Our printing-house often wanted sorts, and there was no letter-founder in America; I had seen types cast at James's in London, but without much attention to the manner; however, I now contrived a mold, made use of the letters we had as puncheons, struck the matrices in lead, and thus supplied in a pretty tolerable way all deficiencies. I also engraved several things on occasion; I made the ink; I was warehouseman, and every thing, and, in short, quite a factotum.

But, however serviceable I might be, I found that my services became every day of less importance, as the other hands improved in the business; and, when Keimer paid my second quarter's wages, he let me know that he felt them too heavy, and thought I should make an abatement. He grew by degrees less civil, put on more of the master, frequently

found fault, was captious, and seemed ready for an outbreaking. I went on, nevertheless, with a good deal of patience, thinking that his encumbered circumstances were partly the cause. At length a trifle snapped our connections; for, a great noise happening near the court-house, I put my head out of the window to see what was the matter. Keimer, being in the street, looked up and saw me, called out to me in a loud voice and angry tone to mind my business, adding some reproachful words, that nettled me the more for their publicity, all the neighbors who were looking out on the same occasion, being witnesses how I was treated. He came up immediately into the printing-house, continued the quarrel, high words passed on both sides, he gave me the quarter's warning we had stipulated, expressing a wish that he had not been obliged to so long a warning. I told him his wish was unnecessary, for I would leave him that instant; and so, taking my hat, walked out of doors, desiring Meredith, whom I saw below, to take care of some things I left, and bring them to my lodgings.

Meredith came accordingly in the evening, when we talked my affair over. He had conceived a great regard for me, and was very unwilling that I should leave the house while he remained in it. He dissuaded me from returning to my native country, which I began to think of; he reminded me that Keimer was in debt for all he possessed; that his creditors began to be uneasy; that he kept his shop miserably, sold often without profit for ready money, and often trusted without keeping accounts; that he must therefore fail, which would make a vacancy I might profit of. I objected my want of money. He then let me know that his father had a high opinion of me, and, from some discourse that had passed between them, he was sure would advance money to set us up,

if I would enter into partnership with him. "My time," says he, "will be out with Keimer in the spring; by that time we may have our press and types in from London. I am sensible I am no workman; if you like it, your skill in the business shall be set against the stock I furnish, and we shall share the profits equally."

The proposal was agreeable, and I consented; his father was in town and approved of it; the more as he saw I had great influence with his son, had prevailed on him to abstain long from dram-drinking, and he hoped might break him of that wretched habit entirely, when we came to be so closely connected. I gave an inventory to the father, who carried it to a merchant; the things were sent for, the secret was to be kept till they should arrive, and in the meantime I was to get work, if I could, at the other printing-house. But I found no vacancy there, and so remained idle a few days, when Keimer, on a prospect of being employed to print some paper money in New Jersey, which would require cuts and various types that I only could supply, and apprehending Bradford might engage me, and get the job from him, sent me a very civil message, that old friends should not part for a few words, the effect of sudden passion, and wishing me to return. Meredith persuaded me to comply, as it would give more opportunity for his improvement under my daily instructions; so I returned, and we went on more smoothly than for some time before. The New Jersey job was obtained, I contrived a copper-plate press for it, the first that had been seen in the country; I cut several ornaments and checks for the bills. We went together to Burlington, where I executed the whole to satisfaction; and he received so large a sum for the work as to be enabled thereby to keep his head much longer above water.

At Burlington I made an acquaintance with many principal people of the province. Several of them had been appointed by the Assembly a committee to attend the press, and take care that no more bills were printed than the law directed. They were, therefore, by turns constantly with us, and generally he who attended brought with him a friend or two for company. My mind having been much more improved by reading than Keimer's, I suppose it was for that reason my conversation seemed to be more valued. They had me to their houses, introduced me to their friends, and showed me much civility; while he, though the master, was a little neglected. In truth, he was an odd fish; ignorant of common life, fond of rudely opposing received opinions, slovenly to extreme dirtiness, enthusiastic in some points of religion, and a little knavish withal.

We continued there near three months; and by that time I could reckon among my acquired friends, Judge Allen, Samuel Bustill, the secretary of the province, Isaac Pearson, Joseph Cooper, and several of the Smiths, members of Assembly, and Isaac Decow, the surveyor-general. The latter was a shrewd, sagacious old man, who told me that he began for himself, when young, by wheeling clay for the brickmakers, learned to write after he was of age, carried the chain for surveyors, who taught him surveying, and he had now by his industry acquired a good estate; and says he, "I foresee that you will soon work this man out of his business, and make a fortune in it at Philadelphia." He had not then the least intimation of my intention to set up there or anywhere. These friends were afterwards of great use to me, as I occasionally was to some of them. They all continued their regard for me as long as they lived.

Before I enter upon my public appearance in business, it

may be well to let you know the then state of my mind with regard to my principles and morals, that you may see how far those influenced the future events of my life. My parents had early given me religious impressions, and brought me through my childhood piously in the Dissenting way. But I was scarce fifteen, when, after doubting by turns, of several points, as I found them disputed in the different books I read, I began to doubt of Revelation itself. Some books against Deism fell into my hands; they were said to be the substance of sermons preached at Boyle's Lectures. It happened that they wrought an effect on me quite contrary to what was intended by them; for the arguments of the Deists, which were quoted to be refuted, appeared to me much stronger than the refutations; in short, I soon became a thorough Deist. My arguments perverted some others, particularly Collins and Ralph; but, each of them having afterwards wronged me greatly without the least compunction, and recollecting Keith's conduct towards me (who was another freethinker), and my own towards Vernon and Miss Read, which at times gave me great trouble, I began to suspect that this doctrine, though it might be true, was not very useful. My London pamphlet [printed in 1725], which had for its motto these lines of Dryden:

> Whatever is, is right. Though purblind man
> Sees but a part o' the chain, the nearest link:
> His eyes not carrying to the equal beam,
> That poises all above;

and from the attributes of God, his infinite wisdom, goodness and power, concluded that nothing could possibly be wrong in the world, and that vice and virtue were empty distinctions, no such things existing, appeared now not so clever a

performance as I once thought it; and I doubted whether some error had not insinuated itself unperceived into my argument, so as to infect all that followed, as is common in metaphysical reasonings.

I grew convinced that *truth*, *sincerity*, *integrity* in dealings between man and man are of the utmost importance to the felicity of life; and I formed written resolutions, which still remain in my journal book, to practice them ever while I lived. Revelation had indeed no weight with me as such; but I entertained an opinion that, though certain actions might not be bad *because* they were forbidden by it, or good *because* it commanded them, yet probably those actions might be forbidden *because* they were bad for us, or commanded *because* they were beneficial to us, in their own natures, all the circumstances of things considered. And this persuasion, with the kind hand of Providence, or some guardian angel, or accidental favorable circumstances and situations, or all together, preserved me through this dangerous time of youth and the hazardous situations I was sometimes in among strangers, remote from the eye and advice of my father, without any willful gross immorality or injustice, that might have been expected from my want of religion. I say willful because the instances I have mentioned had something of *necessity* in them, from my youth, inexperience, and the knavery of others. I had therefore a tolerable character to begin the world with; I valued it properly, and determined to preserve it.

We had not been long returned to Philadelphia before the new types arrived from London. We settled with Keimer, and left him, by his consent, before he heard of it. We found a house to hire near the market and took it. To lessen the rent, which was then but twenty-four pounds a year, though

I have since known it to let for seventy, we took in Thomas Godfrey, a glazier, and his family, who were to pay a considerable part of it to us, and we to board with them. We had scarce opened our letters and put our press in order, before George House, an acquaintance of mine, brought a countryman to us, whom he had met in the street inquiring for a printer. All our cash was now expended in the variety of particulars we had been obliged to procure, and this countryman's five shillings, being our first-fruits, and coming so seasonably, gave me more pleasure than any crown I have since earned; and the gratitude I felt toward House has made me often more ready, than perhaps I should otherwise have been, to assist young beginners.

There are croakers in every country, always boding its ruin. Such a one then lived in Philadelphia; a person of note, an elderly man, with a wise look and a very grave manner of speaking; his name was Samuel Mickle. This gentleman, a stranger to me, stopped one day at my door, and asked me if I was the young man who had lately opened a new printing-house. Being answered in the affirmative, he said he was sorry for me, because it was an expensive undertaking, and the expense would be lost; for Philadelphia was a sinking place, the people already half bankrupts, or near being so; all appearances to the contrary, such as new buildings and the rise of rents, being to his certain knowledge fallacious; for they were, in fact, among the things that would soon ruin us. And he gave me such a detail of misfortunes now existing, or that were soon to exist, that he left me half melancholy. Had I known him before I engaged in this business, probably I never should have done it. This man continued to live in this decaying place, and to declaim in the same strain, refusing for many years to buy a house there, because

all was going to destruction; and at last I had the pleasure of seeing him give five times as much for one as he might have bought it for when he first began his croaking.

## FRANKLIN ESTABLISHES THE JUNTO

I should have mentioned before, that, in the autumn of the preceding year, I had formed most of my ingenious acquaintance into a club of mutual improvement, which we called the JUNTO; we met on Friday evenings. The rules that I drew up required that every member, in his turn, should produce one or more queries on any point of Morals, Politics, or Natural Philosophy, to be discussed by the company; and once in three months produce and read an essay of his own writing, on any subject he pleased. Our debates were to be under the direction of a president, and to be conducted in the sincere spirit of inquiry after truth, without fondness for dispute, or desire of victory; and, to prevent warmth, all expressions of positiveness in opinions, or direct contradiction, were after some time made contraband, and prohibited under small pecuniary penalties.

On admission to the Club, the candidate was to stand up, and lay his hand on his breast and be asked these questions, viz.:—

1st. Have you any particular disrespect to any present member? Answer: I have not.

2d. Do you sincerely declare that you love mankind in general, of what profession or religion whatsoever? Ans. I do.

3d. Do you think any person ought to be harmed in his body, name, or goods, for mere speculative opinions, or his external way of worship? Ans. No.

4th. Do you love truth for truth's sake, and will you en-

deavor impartially to find and receive it yourself, and communicate it to others? Ans. Yes.

[Here are a few of the inquiries put to members for the purpose of obtaining subjects for debate:—

Have you met with any thing in the author you last read remarkable or suitable to be communicated to the Junto, particularly in history, morality, poetry, physics, travels, mechanic arts, or other parts of knowledge?

What new story have you lately heard, agreeable for telling in conversation?

Hath any citizen in your knowledge failed in his business lately, and what have you heard of the cause?

Have you lately heard of any citizen's thriving well, and by what means?

Have you lately heard how any present rich man, here or elsewhere, got his estate?

Do you know of a fellow-citizen, who has lately done a worthy action, deserving praise and imitation; or who has lately committed an error, proper for us to be warned against and avoid?

Do you know of any deserving young beginner, lately set up [in business] whom it lies in the power of the Junto any way to encourage?]

[In 1768 the Junto became the nucleus of the American Philosophical Society, of which Franklin was the first president. The following were some of the questions discussed by the Junto:—

Can any one particular form of government suit all mankind?

How may smoky chimneys be best cured?

Which is least criminal—a bad action joined with a good intention, or a good action with a bad intention?

Is the emission of paper money safe?

What is the reason that the tides rise higher in the Bay of Fundy than in the Bay of Delaware?]

The first members were Joseph Breintnal, a copyer of deeds for the scriveners, a good-natured, friendly, middle-aged man, a great lover of poetry, reading all he could meet with, and writing some that was tolerable; very ingenious in many little nicknackeries, and of sensible conversation.

Thomas Godfrey, a self-taught mathematician, great in his way, and afterward inventor of what is now called Hadley's Quadrant. But he knew little out of his way, and was not a pleasing companion; as, like most great mathematicians I have met with, he expected universal precision in everything said, or was forever denying or distinguishing upon trifles, to the disturbance of all conversation. He soon left us.

Nicholas Scull, a surveyor, afterward surveyor-general, who loved books, and sometimes made a few verses.

William Parsons, bred a shoemaker, but, loving reading, had acquired a considerable share of mathematics, which he first studied with a view to astrology, that he afterwards laughed at. He also became surveyor-general.

William Maugridge, a joiner, a most exquisite mechanic, and a solid, sensible man.

Hugh Meredith, Stephen Potts, and George Webb I have characterized before.

Robert Grace, a young gentleman of some fortune, generous, lively, and witty; a lover of punning and of his friends.

And William Coleman, then a merchant's clerk, about my age, who had the coolest, clearest head, the best heart, and the exactest morals of almost any man I ever met with. He became afterwards a merchant of great note, and one of our provincial judges. Our friendship continued without inter-

ruption to his death, upward of forty years; and the club continued almost as long, and was the best school of philosophy, morality, and politics that then existed in the province; for our queries, which were read the week preceding their discussion, put us upon reading with attention upon the several subjects, that we might speak more to the purpose; and here, too, we acquired better habits of conversation, every thing being studied in our rules which might prevent our disgusting each other. From hence the long continuance of the club, which I shall have frequent occasion to speak further of hereafter.

But my giving this account of it here is to show something of the interest I had, every one of these exerting themselves in recommending business to us. Breintnal particularly procured us from the Quakers the printing forty sheets of their history, the rest being to be done by Keimer; and upon this we worked exceedingly hard, for the price was low. It was a folio, in pica, with long primer notes. I composed of it a sheet a day, and Meredith worked it off at press; it was often eleven at night, and sometimes later, before I had finished my distribution for the next day's work, for the little jobs sent in by our other friends now and then put us back. But so determined I was to continue doing a sheet a day of the folio, that one night, when, having imposed my forms, I thought my day's work over, one of them by accident was broken, and two pages reduced to pi, I immediately distributed and composed it over again before I went to bed; and this industry, visible to our neighbors, began to give us character and credit; particularly, I was told, that mention being made of the new printing-office at the merchants' Everynight club, the general opinion was that it must fail, there being already two printers in the place, Keimer and Brad-

ford; but Dr. Baird (whom you and I saw many years after at his native place, St. Andrews, in Scotland), gave a contrary opinion: "For the industry of that Franklin," says he, "is superior to any thing I ever saw of the kind; I see him still at work when I go home from club, and he is at work again before his neighbors are out of bed." This struck the rest; and we soon after had offers from one of them to supply us with stationery; but as yet we did not choose to engage in shop business.

I mention this industry the more particularly and the more freely, though it seems to be talking in my own praise, that those of my posterity, who shall read it, may know the use of that virtue, when they see its effects in my favor throughout this relation.

George Webb, who had found a female friend that lent him wherewith to purchase his time of Keimer, now came to offer himself as a journeyman to us.

## FRANKLIN BEGINS THE PUBLICATION OF "THE PENNSYLVANIA GAZETTE"

We could not then employ him; but I foolishly let him know, as a secret, that I soon intended to begin a newspaper, and might then have work for him. My hopes of success, as I told him, were founded on this, that the then only newspaper, printed by Bradford, was a paltry thing, wretchedly managed, no way entertaining, and yet was profitable to him; I therefore thought a good paper would scarcely fail of good encouragement. I requested Webb not to mention it; but he told it to Keimer, who immediately, to be beforehand with me, published proposals for printing one himself, on which Webb was to be employed. I resented this; and, to

counteract them, as I could not yet begin our paper, I wrote several pieces of entertainment for Bradford's paper under the title of the Busy Body, which Breintnal continued some months. By this means the attention of the public was fixed on that paper, and Keimer's proposals, which we burlesqued and ridiculed, were disregarded. He began his paper, however, and, after carrying it on three quarters of a year, with at most only ninety subscribers, he offered it to me for a trifle; and I, having been ready some time to go on with it, took it in hand directly; and it proved in a few years extremely profitable to me.

I perceive that I am apt to speak in the singular number, though our partnership still continued; the reason may be that, in fact, the whole management of the business lay upon me. Meredith was no compositor, a poor pressman, and seldom sober. My friends lamented my connection with him, but I was to make the best of it.

Our first papers made a quite different appearance from any before in the province; a better type, and better printed. But some spirited remarks of my writing, on the dispute then going on between Governor Burnet and the Massachusetts Assembly, struck the principal people, occasioned the paper and the manager of it to be much talked of, and in a few weeks brought them all to be our subscribers.

Their example was followed by many, and our number went on growing continually. This was one of the first good effects of my having learned a little to scribble; another was, that the leading men, seeing a newspaper now in the hands of one who could also handle a pen, thought it convenient to oblige and encourage me. Bradford still printed the votes, and laws, and other public business. He had printed an address of the House to the governor, in a

coarse, blundering manner; we reprinted it elegantly and correctly, and sent one to every member. They were sensible of the difference: it strengthened the hands of our friends in the House, and they voted us their printers for the year ensuing.

Among my friends in the House I must not forget Mr. Hamilton, before mentioned, who was then returned from England, and had a seat in it. He interested himself for me strongly in that instance, as he did in many others afterward, continuing his patronage till his death.

[The following anecdote is told of Franklin's independence as an editor. Some of the patrons of the *Gazette* thought that he handled the public conduct of certain citizens of high standing rather too freely, and expressed their disapproval of such plain speaking. Franklin heard their complaint, and then courteously invited them to favor him with their company at supper, bringing with them the other gentlemen of their acquaintance who were dissatisfied with his course. They came. When supper was announced and the guests had seated themselves at the table, they were surprised to see nothing before them but two puddings made of coarse meal, commonly called *sawdust puddings*, and a stone pitcher of water. Franklin helped them all, and then filling his own plate, proceeded to eat heartily. The guests tried to imitate him, but could not, their appetites refusing to obey their will. Seeing their predicament, Franklin at length arose and said, "*My friends, any one who can subsist on sawdust pudding and water, as I can, needs no man's patronage.*"]

Mr. Vernon about this time put me in mind of the debt I owed him, but did not press me. I wrote him an ingenuous letter of acknowledgment, craved his forbearance a little longer, which he allowed me, and as soon as I was able I

paid the principal, with interest, and many thanks: so that erratum was in some degree corrected.

But now another difficulty came upon me which I had never the least reason to expect. Mr. Meredith's father, who was to have paid for our printing-house, according to the expectations given me, was able to advance only one hundred pounds currency, which had been paid; and a hundred more was due to the merchant, who grew impatient, and sued us all. We gave bail, but saw that if the money could not be raised in time, the suit must soon come to a judgment and execution, and our hopeful prospects must, with us, be ruined, as the press and letters must be sold for payment, perhaps at half price.

In this distress two true friends, whose kindness I have never forgotten, nor ever shall forget while I can remember any thing, came to me separately, unknown to each other, and, without any application from me, offering each of them to advance me all the money that should be necessary to enable me to take the whole business upon myself, if that should be practicable; but they did not like my continuing the partnership with Meredith, who, as they said, was often seen drunk in the streets, and playing at low games in alehouses, much to our discredit. These two friends were William Coleman and Robert Grace. I told them I could not propose a separation while any prospect remained of the Meredith's' fulfilling their part of our agreement, because I thought myself under great obligations to them for what they had done, and would do if they could; but, if they finally failed in their performance, and our partnership must be dissolved, I should then think myself at liberty to accept the assistance of my friends.

Thus the matter rested for some time, when I said to my

partner, "Perhaps your father is dissatisfied at the part you have undertaken in this affair of ours, and is unwilling to advance for you and me what he would for you alone. If that is the case, tell me, and I will resign the whole to you, and go about my business." "No," said he, "my father has really been disappointed, and is really unable; and I am unwilling to distress him further. I see this is a business I am not fit for. I was bred a farmer, and it was folly in me to come to town, and put myself, at thirty years of age, an apprentice to learn a new trade. Many of our Welsh people are going to settle in North Carolina, where land is cheap. I am inclined to go with them, and follow my old employment. You may find friends to assist you. If you will take the debts of the company upon you; return to my father the hundred pounds he has advanced; pay my little personal debts, and give me thirty pounds and a new saddle, I will relinquish the partnership, and leave the whole in your hands." I agreed to this proposal; it was drawn up in writing, signed, and sealed immediately. I gave him what he demanded, and he went soon after to Carolina, from whence he sent me next year two long letters, containing the best account that had been given of that country, the climate, the soil, husbandry, etc., for in those matters he was very judicious. I printed them in the papers, and they gave great satisfaction to the public.

As soon as he was gone, I recurred to my two friends; and because I would not give an unkind preference to either, I took half of what each had offered, and I wanted, of one, and half of the other: paid off the company's debts, and went on with the business in my own name, advertising that the partnership was dissolved. I think this was in or about the year 1729.

About this time there was a cry among the people for more paper money, only fifteen thousand pounds being extant in the province, and that soon to be sunk. The wealthy inhabitants opposed any addition, being against all paper currency, from an apprehension that it would depreciate, as it had done in New England, to the prejudice of all creditors. We had discussed this point in our Junto, where I was on the side of an addition, being persuaded that the first small sum struck in 1723 had done much good by increasing the trade, employment, and number of inhabitants in the province, since I now saw all the old houses inhabited, and many new ones building: whereas I remembered well, that when I first walked about the streets of Philadelphia, eating my roll, I saw most of the houses in Walnut-street, between Second and Front streets, with bills on their doors, "To be let"; and many likewise in Chestnut-street and other streets, which made me then think the inhabitants of the city were deserting it one after another.

Our debates possessed me so fully of the subject, that I wrote and printed an anonymous pamphlet on it, entitled "*The Nature and Necessity of a Paper Currency.*" It was well received by the common people in general; but the rich men disliked it, for it increased and strengthened the clamor for more money, and they happening to have no writers among them that were able to answer it, their opposition slackened, and the point was carried by a majority in the House. My friends there, who conceived I had been of some service, thought fit to reward me by employing me in printing the money: a very profitable job and a great help to me. This was another advantage gained by my being able to write.

The utility of this currency became by time and experience so evident as never afterwards to be much disputed;

so that it grew soon to fifty-five thousand pounds, and in 1739 to eighty thousand pounds, since which it arose during war to upwards of three hundred and fifty thousand pounds, trade, building, and inhabitants all the while increasing, though I now think there are limits beyond which the quantity may be hurtful.

I soon after obtained, through my friend Hamilton, the printing of the Newcastle paper money, another profitable job as I then thought it; small things appearing great to those in small circumstances; and these, to me, were really great advantages, as they were great encouragements. He procured for me, also, the printing of the laws and votes of that government, which continued in my hands as long as I followed the business.

I now opened a little stationer's shop. I had in it blanks of all sorts, the correctest that ever appeared among us, being assisted in that by my friend Breintnal. I had also paper, parchment, chapmen's books, etc. One Whitemash, a compositor I had known in London, an excellent workman, now came to me, and worked with me constantly and diligently; and I took an apprentice, the son of Aquila Rose.

I began now gradually to pay off the debt I was under for the printing-house. In order to secure my credit and character as a tradesman, I took care not only to be in *reality* industrious and frugal, but to avoid all appearances to the contrary. I dressed plainly; I was seen at no places of idle diversion. I never went out a fishing or shooting; a book, indeed, sometimes diverted me from my work, but that was seldom, snug, and gave no scandal; and, to show that I was not above my business, I sometimes brought home the paper I purchased at the stores through the streets on a wheelbarrow. Thus being esteemed an industrious, thriving young

man, and paying duly for what I bought, the merchants who imported stationery solicited my custom; others proposed supplying me with books, and I went on swimmingly. In the mean time Keimer's credit and business declining daily, he was at last forced to sell his printing-house to satisfy his creditors. He went to Barbadoes, and there lived some years in very poor circumstances.

His apprentice, David Harry, whom I had instructed while I worked with him, set up in his place at Philadelphia, having bought his materials. I was at first apprehensive of a powerful rival in Harry, as his friends were very able, and had a good deal of interest. I therefore proposed a partnership to him, which he, fortunately for me, rejected with scorn. He was very proud, dressed like a gentleman, lived expensively, took much diversion and pleasure abroad, ran in debt and neglected his business; upon which, all business left him; and, finding nothing to do, he followed Keimer to Barbadoes, taking the printing-house with him. There this apprentice employed his former master as a journeyman; they quarreled often; Harry went continually behindhand, and at length was forced to sell his types and return to his country work in Pennsylvania. The person that bought them employed Keimer to use them, but in a few years he died.

There remained now no competitor with me at Philadelphia but the old one, Bradford; who was rich and easy, did a little printing now and then by straggling hands, but was not very anxious about the business. However, as he kept the post-office, it was imagined he had better opportunities of obtaining news; his paper was thought a better distributer of advertisements than mine, and therefore had many more, which was a profitable thing to him, and a disadvantage to me; for though I did indeed receive and send papers

by the post, yet the public opinion was otherwise, for what I did send was by bribing the riders, who took them privately, Bradford being unkind enough to forbid it, which occasioned some resentment on my part; and I thought so meanly of him for it, that when I afterward came into his situation, I took care never to imitate it.

I had hitherto continued to board with Godfrey, who lived in part of my house with his wife and children, and had one side of the shop for his glazier's business, though he worked little, being always absorbed in his mathematics. Mrs. Godfrey projected a match for me with a relation's daughter, took opportunities of bringing us often together, till a serious courtship on my part ensued, the girl being in herself very deserving. The old folks encouraged me by continual invitations to supper, and by leaving us together, till at length it was time to explain. Mrs. Godfrey managed our little treaty. I let her know that I expected as much money with their daughter as would pay off my remaining debt for the printing-house, which I believe was not then above a hundred pounds. She brought me word they had no such sum to spare; I said they might mortgage their house in the loan-office. The answer to this, after some days, was, that they did not approve the match; that, on inquiry of Bradford, they had been informed the printing business was not a profitable one; the types would soon be worn out, and more wanted; that S. Keimer and D. Harry had failed one after the other, and I should probably soon follow them; and, therefore, I was forbidden the house and the daughter shut up.

Whether this was a real change of sentiment or only artifice, on a supposition of our being too far engaged in affection to retract, and therefore that we should steal a marriage,

which would leave them at liberty to give or withhold what they pleased, I know not; but I suspected the latter, resented it, and went no more. Mrs. Godfrey brought me afterward some more favorable accounts of their disposition, and would have drawn me on again; but I declared absolutely my resolution to have nothing more to do with that family. This was resented by the Godfreys; we differed, and they removed, leaving me the whole house, and I resolved to take no more inmates.

But this affair having turned my thoughts to marriage, I looked round me and made overtures of acquaintance in other places; but soon found that, the business of a printer being generally thought a poor one, I was not to expect money with a wife, unless with such a one as I should not otherwise think agreeable. A friendly correspondence as neighbors and old acquaintances had continued between me and Mrs. Read's family, who all had a regard for me from the time of my first lodging in their house. I was often invited there and consulted in their affairs, wherein I sometimes was of service. I pitied poor Miss Read's unfortunate situation, who was generally dejected, seldom cheerful, and avoided company. I considered my giddiness and inconsistency when in London, as in a great degree the cause of her unhappiness, though the mother was good enough to think the fault more her own than mine, as she had prevented our marrying before I went thither and persuaded the other match in my absence. Our mutual affection was revived, but there were now great objections to our union. The match was indeed looked upon as invalid, a preceding wife being said to be living in England; but this could not easily be proved, because of the distance; and, though there was a report of his death, it was not certain. Then, though it

should be true, he had left many debts, which his successor might be called upon to pay. We ventured, however, over all these difficulties, and I took her to wife, September 1st, 1730. None of the inconveniences happened that we had apprehended; she proved a good and faithful helpmate, assisted me much by attending the shop; we throve together, and have ever mutually endeavored to make each other happy. Thus I corrected that great *erratum* as well as I could.

[In a playful letter to a friend written many years after his marriage, Franklin quotes from some verses of his own, applying them to his wife:—

Am I loaded with care, she takes off a large share;
That the burden ne'er makes me to reel;
Does good fortune arrive, the joy of my wife
Quite doubles the pleasure I feel.

Some faults have we all, and so has my Joan,
But then they're exceedingly small;
And, now I'm grown so used to them, so like my own,
I scarcely can see them at all.

Were the finest young princess, with millions in purse,
To be had in exchange for my Joan,
I could not get better wife, might get a worse,
So I'll stick to my dearest old Joan.]

About this time, our club meeting, not at a tavern, but in a little room of Mr. Grace's, set apart for that purpose, a proposition was made by me, that, since our books were often referred to in our disquisitions upon the queries, it might be convenient to us to have them altogether where we met, that upon occasion they might be consulted; and by thus clubbing our books to a common library, we should,

while we liked to keep them together, have each of us the advantage of using the books of all the other members, which would be nearly as beneficial as if each owned the whole. It was liked and agreed to, and we filled one end of the room with such books as we could best spare. The number was not so great as we expected; and though they had been of great use, yet some inconveniences occurring for want of due care of them, the collection, after about a year, was separated, and each took his books home again.

And now I set on foot my first project of a public nature, that for a subscription library. I drew up the proposals, got them put into form by our great scrivener, Brockden, and, by the help of my friends in the Junto, procured fifty subscribers of forty shillings each to begin with, and ten shillings a year for fifty years, the term our company was to continue. We afterwards obtained a charter, the company being increased to one hundred: this was the mother of all the North American subscription libraries, now so numerous. It is become a great thing itself, and continually increasing. These libraries have improved the general conversation of the Americans, made the common tradesmen and farmers as intelligent as most gentlemen from other countries, and perhaps have contributed in some degree to the stand so generally made throughout the colonies in defence of their privileges.

On this little fund we began. The books were imported; the library was opened one day in the week for lending to the subscribers, on their promissory notes to pay double the value if not duly returned. The institution soon manifested its utility, was imitated by other towns, and in other provinces. The libraries were augmented by donations; reading became fashionable; and our people, having no public amusements to divert their attention from study, became better

acquainted with books, and in a few years were observed by strangers to be better instructed and more intelligent than people of the same rank generally are in other countries.

When we were about to sign the above-mentioned articles, which were to be binding on us, our heirs, etc., for fifty years, Mr. Brockden, the scrivener, said to us, "You are young men, but it is scarcely probable that any of you will live to see the expiration of the term fixed in the instrument." A number of us, however, are yet living; but the instrument was, after a few years, rendered null by a charter that incorporated and gave perpetuity to the company.

The objections and reluctances I met with in soliciting the subscriptions, made me soon feel the impropriety of presenting one's self as the proposer of any useful project, that might be supposed to raise one's reputation in the smallest degree above that of one's neighbors, when one has need of their assistance to accomplish that project. I therefore put myself as much as I could out of sight, and stated it as a scheme of a *number of friends*, who had requested me to go about and propose it to such as they thought lovers of reading. In this way my affair went on more smoothly, and I ever after practiced it on such occasions; and, from my frequent successes, can heartily recommend it. The present little sacrifice of your vanity will afterwards be amply repaid. If it remains a while uncertain to whom the merit belongs, some one more vain than yourself will be encouraged to claim it, and then even envy will be disposed to do you justice by plucking those assumed feathers, and restoring them to their right owner.

This library afforded me the means of improvement by constant study, for which I set apart an hour or two each day, and thus repaired in some degree the loss of the learned education my father once intended for me. Reading was the

only amusement I allowed myself. I spent no time in taverns, games, or frolics of any kind; and my industry in my business continued as indefatigable as it was necessary. I was indebted for my printing-house; I had a young family coming on to be educated, and I had to contend for business with two printers, who were established in the place before me. My circumstances, however, grew daily easier. My original habits of frugality continuing, and my father, having, among his instructions to me when a boy, frequently repeated a proverb of Solomon, "Seest thou a man diligent in his calling, he shall stand before kings, he shall not stand before mean men," I from thence considered industry as a means of obtaining wealth and distinction, which encouraged me, though I did not think that I should ever literally *stand before kings*, which, however, has since happened; for I have stood before *five*, and even had the honor of sitting down with one, the King of Denmark, to dinner.

We have an English proverb that says, "*He that would thrive, must ask his wife.*" It was lucky for me that I had one as much disposed to industry and frugality as myself. She assisted me cheerfully in my business, folding and stitching pamphlets, tending shop, purchasing old linen rags for the paper-makers, etc., etc. We kept no idle servants, our table was plain and simple, our furniture of the cheapest. For instance, my breakfast was a long time bread and milk (no tea), and I ate it out of a twopenny earthen porringer, with a pewter spoon. But mark how luxury will enter families, and make a progress, in spite of principle: being called one morning to breakfast, I found it in a china bowl, with a spoon of silver! They had been bought for me without my knowledge by my wife, and had cost her the enormous sum of three-and-twenty shillings, for which she had no other

excuse or apology to make, but that she thought *her* husband deserved a silver spoon and china bowl as well as any of his neighbors. This was the first appearance of plate and china in our house, which afterward, in a course of years, as our wealth increased, augmented gradually to several hundred pounds in value.

I had been religiously educated as a Presbyterian, but I early absented myself from the public assemblies of the sect, Sunday being my studying day. I, however, never was without some religious principles. I never doubted, for instance, the existence of the Deity; that he made the world, and governed it by his Providence; that the most acceptable service of God was the doing good to man; that our souls are immortal; and that all crime will be punished, and virtue rewarded, either here or hereafter. These I esteemed the essentials of every religion; and, being to be found in the religions we had in our country, I respected them all, though with different degrees of respect, as I found them more or less mixed with other articles, which, without any tendency to inspire, promote, or confirm morality, served principally to divide us, and make us unfriendly to one another. This respect to all, with an opinion that the worst had some good effects, induced me to avoid all discourse that might tend to lessen the good opinion another might have of his own religion; and as our province increased in people, and new places of worship were continually wanted, and generally erected by voluntary contribution, my mite for such purpose, whatever might be the sect, was never refused.

Though I seldom attended any public worship, I had still an opinion of its propriety, and of its utility when rightly conducted, and I regularly paid my annual subscription for the support of the only Presbyterian minister or meeting we

had in Philadelphia. He used to visit me sometimes as a friend, and admonish me to attend his administrations, and I was now and then prevailed on to do so, once for five Sundays successively. Had he been in my opinion a good preacher, perhaps I might have continued, notwithstanding the occasion I had for the Sunday's leisure in my course of study; but his discourses were chiefly either polemic arguments, or explications of the peculiar doctrines of our sect, and were all to me very dry, uninteresting, and unedifying, since not a single moral principle was inculcated or enforced, their aim seeming to be rather to make us church members than good citizens.

I had some years before composed a little Liturgy, or form of prayer, for my own private use (viz., in 1728), entitled, *Articles of Belief and Acts of Religion.* I returned to the use of this, and went no more to the public assemblies. My conduct might be blamable; but I leave it, without attempting further to excuse it, my present purpose being to relate facts, and not to make apologies for them.

## FRANKLIN'S PLAN OF LIFE

It was about this time I conceived the bold and arduous project of arriving at moral perfection. I wished to live without committing any fault at any time; I would conquer all that either natural inclination, custom, or company might lead me into. As I knew, or thought I knew, what was right and wrong, I did not see why I might not always do the one and avoid the other. But I soon found I had undertaken a task of more difficulty than I had imagined. While my care was employed in guarding against one fault, I was often surprised by another; habit took the advantage of inattention; inclination was sometimes too strong for reason. I concluded,

at length, that the mere speculative conviction that it was our interest to be completely virtuous, was not sufficient to prevent our slipping, and that the contrary habits must be broken, and good ones acquired and established, before we can have any dependence on a steady, uniform rectitude of conduct. For this purpose I therefore contrived the following method.

In the various enumerations of the moral virtues I had met with in my reading, I found the catalogue more or less numerous, as different writers included more or fewer ideas under the same name. Temperance, for example, was by some confined to eating and drinking, while by others it was extended to mean the moderating every other pleasure, appetite, inclination, or passion, bodily or mental, even to our avarice and ambition. I proposed to myself, for the sake of clearness, to use rather more names, with fewer ideas annexed to each, than a few names with more ideas; and I included under thirteen names of virtues all that at that time occurred to me as necessary or desirable, and annexed to each a short precept, which fully expressed the extent I gave to its meaning.

These names of virtues, with their precepts, were:

1. Temperance

Eat not to dullness; drink not to elevation.

2. Silence

Speak not but what may benefit others or yourself; avoid trifling conversation.

3. Order

Let all your things have their places; let each part of your business have its time.

4. Resolution

Resolve to perform what you ought; perform without fail what you resolve.

5. Frugality

Make no expense but to do good to others or yourself; *i.e.*, waste nothing.

6. Industry

Lose no time; be always employed in something useful; cut off all unnecessary actions.

7. Sincerity

Use no hurtful deceit; think innocently and justly; and, if you speak, speak accordingly.

8. Justice

Wrong none by doing injuries, or omitting the benefits that are your duty.

9. Moderation

Avoid extremes; forbear resenting injuries so much as you think they deserve.

10. Cleanliness

Tolerate no uncleanliness in body, clothes, or habitation.

11. Tranquillity

Be not disturbed at trifles, or at accidents common or unavoidable.

12. Chastity

13. Humility

Imitate Jesus and Socrates.

My intention being to acquire the *habitude* of all these virtues, I judged it would be well not to distract my attention by attempting the whole at once, but to fix it on one of them at a time; and, when I should be master of that, then to proceed to another, and so on, till I should have gone through the whole, and, as the previous acquisition of some might facilitate the acquisition of certain others, I arranged them with that view, as they stand above. Temperance first, as it tends to procure that coolness and clearness of head which is so necessary where constant vigilance was to be kept up, and guard maintained against the unremitting attraction of ancient habits, and the force of perpetual temptations. This being acquired and established, Silence would be more easy; and my desire being to gain knowledge at the same time that I improved in virtue, and considering that in conversation it was obtained rather by the use of the ears than of the tongue, and therefore wishing to break a habit I was getting into of prattling, punning, and joking, which only made me acceptable to trifling company, I gave *Silence* the second place. This and the next, *Order*, I expected would allow me more time for attending to my project and my studies. *Resolution*, once become habitual, would keep me firm in my endeavors to obtain all the subsequent virtues; *Frugality* and Industry freeing me from my remaining debt, and producing affluence and independence, would make more easy the practice of Sincerity and Justice, etc., etc. Conceiving then, that, agreeably to the advice of Pythagoras in his Golden Verses, daily examination would be necessary, I contrived the following method for conducting that examination.

I made a little book [1st July, 1733] in which I allotted a page for each of the virtues. I ruled each page with red ink, so as to have seven columns, one for each day of the

week, marking each column with a letter for the day. I crossed these columns with thirteen red lines, marking the beginning of each line with the first letter of one of the virtues, on which line, and in its proper column, I might mark, by a little black spot, every fault I found upon examination to have been committed respecting that virtue upon that day.

FORM OF THE PAGES

| TEMPERANCE | | | | | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| EAT NOT TO DULLNESS; DRINK NOT TO ELEVATION | | | | | | | |
| | S. | M. | T. | W. | T. | F. | S. |
| T. | | | | | | | |
| S. | * | * | | * | | * | |
| O. | * * | * | | | * | * | * |
| R. | | | * | | | * | |
| F. | | * | | | * | | |
| I. | | | * | | | | |
| S. | | | | | | | |
| J. | | | | | | | |
| M. | | | | | | | |
| C. | | | | | | | |
| T. | | | | | | | |
| C. | | | | | | | |
| H. | | | | | | | |

I determined to give a week's strict attention to each of the virtues successively. Thus, in the first week, my great guard was to avoid every, the least, offence against *Temperance*, leaving the other virtues to their ordinary chance, only marking every evening the faults of the day. Thus, if in the first week I could keep my first line, marked T clear of spots,

I supposed the habit of that virtue so much strengthened, and its opposite weakened, that I might venture extending my attention to include the next, and for the following week keep both lines clear of spots. Proceeding thus to the last, I could go through a course complete in thirteen weeks, and four courses in a year. And like him who, having a garden to weed, does not attempt to eradicate all the bad herbs at once, which would exceed his reach and his strength, but works on one of the beds at a time, and, having accomplished the first, proceeds to a second, so I should have, I hoped, the encouraging pleasure of seeing on my pages the progress I made in virtue, by clearing successively my lines of their spots, till in the end, by a number of courses, I should be happy in viewing a clean book, after a thirteen weeks' daily examination.

This my little book had for its motto these lines from Addison's *Cato*:

> Here will I hold. If there's a power above us
> (And that there is, all nature cries aloud
> Thro' all her works), He must delight in virtue;
> And that which he delights in must be happy.

Another from Cicero,

O vitæ Philosophia dux! O virtutum indagatrix expultrixque vitiorum! Unus dies, bene et ex præceptis tuis actus, peccanti immortalitati est anteponendus.

Another from the Proverbs of Solomon, speaking of wisdom or virtue,

Length of days is in her right hand, and in her left hand riches and honor. Her ways are ways of pleasantness, and all her paths are peace.—iii. 16, 17.

And conceiving God to be the fountain of wisdom, I thought it right and necessary to solicit his assistance for obtaining it; to this end I formed the following little prayer, which was prefixed to my tables of examination for daily use.

*O powerful Goodness! bountiful Father! merciful Guide! Increase in me that wisdom which discovers my truest interest. Strengthen my resolutions to perform what that wisdom dictates. Accept my kind offices to thy other children as the only return in my power for thy continual favors to me.*

I used also sometimes a little prayer which I took from Thomson's Poems, viz.:

> Father of light and life, thou Good Supreme!
> O teach me what is good; teach me Thyself!
> Save me from folly, vanity, and vice,
> From every low pursuit; and fill my soul
> With knowledge, conscious peace, and virtue pure;
> Sacred, substantial, never-fading bliss!

The precept of *Order* requiring that *every part of my business should have its allotted time,* one page in my little book contained the following scheme of employment for the twenty-four hours of a natural day.

| | | |
|---|---|---|
| THE MORNING. *Question.* What good shall I do this day? | 5<br>6<br>7 | Rise, wash, and address *Powerful Goodness!* Contrive day's business, and take the resolution of the day; prosecute the present study, and breakfast. |
| | 8<br>9<br>10<br>11 | Work. |
| NOON. | 12<br>1 | Read, or overlook my accounts, and dine. |

| | | |
|---|---|---|
| | 2<br>3<br>4<br>5 | Work. |
| Evening.<br>*Question.* What good have I done to-day? | 6<br>7<br>8<br>9 | Put things in their places. Supper. Music or diversion, or conversation. Examination of the day. |
| Night. | 10<br>11<br>12<br>1<br>2<br>3<br>4 | Sleep. |

I entered upon the execution of this plan for self-examination, and continued it with occasional intermissions for some time. I was surprised to find myself so much fuller of faults than I had imagined; but I had the satisfaction of seeing them diminish. To avoid the trouble of renewing now and then my little book, which, by scraping out the marks of old faults on the paper to make room for new ones in a new course, became full of holes, I transferred my tables and precepts to the ivory leaves of a memorandum book, on which the lines were drawn with red ink, that made a durable stain, and on those lines I marked my faults with a black-lead pencil, which marks I could easily wipe out with a wet sponge. After a while I went through one course only in a year, and afterward only one in several years, till at length I omitted them entirely, being employed in voyages and business abroad, with a multiplicity of affairs that interfered; but I always carried my little book with me.

My scheme of ORDER gave me the most trouble; and I found that, though it might be practicable where a man's business was such as to leave him the disposition of his time, that of a journeyman printer, for instance, it was not possible to be exactly observed by a master, who must mix with the world, and often receive people of business at their own hours. *Order,* too, with regard to places for things, papers, etc., I found extremely difficult to acquire. I had not been early accustomed to it, and, having an exceeding good memory, I was not so sensible of the inconvenience attending want of method. This article, therefore, cost me so much painful attention, and my faults in it vexed me so much, and I made so little progress in amendment, and had such frequent relapses, that I was almost ready to give up the attempt, and content myself with a faulty character in that respect, like the man who, in buying an ax of a smith, my neighbor, desired to have the whole of its surface as bright as the edge. The smith consented to grind it bright for him if he would turn the wheel; he turned, while the smith pressed the broad face of the ax hard and heavily on the stone, which made the turning of it very fatiguing. The man came every now and then from the wheel to see how the work went on, and at length would take his ax as it was, without further grinding. "No," said the smith, "turn on, turn on; we shall have it bright by-and-by; as yet, it is only speckled." "Yes," says the man, "*but I think I like a speckled ax best.*" And I believe this may have been the case with many, who, having, for want of some such means as I employed, found the difficulty of obtaining good and breaking bad habits in other points of vice and virtue, have given up the struggle, and concluded that "*a speckled ax was best*"; for some thing, that pretended to be reason, was every now and then suggest-

ing to me that such extreme nicety as I exacted of myself might be a kind of foppery in morals, which, if it were known, would make me ridiculous; that a perfect character might be attended with the inconvenience of being envied and hated; and that a benevolent man should allow a few faults in himself to keep his friends in countenance.

In truth, I found myself incorrigible with respect to Order; and now I am grown old, and my memory bad, I feel very sensibly the want of it. But, on the whole, though I never arrived at the perfection I had been so ambitious of obtaining, but fell far short of it, yet I was, by the endeavor, a better and a happier man than I otherwise should have been if I had not attempted it; as those who aim at perfect writing by imitating the engraved copies, though they never reach the wished-for excellence of those copies, their hand is mended by the endeavor, and is tolerable while it continues fair and legible.

It may be well my posterity should be informed that to this little artifice, with the blessing of God, their ancestor owed the constant felicity of his life, down to his 79th year, in which this is written [1785]. What reverses may attend the remainder is in the hand of Providence; but, if they arrive, the reflection on past happiness enjoyed ought to help his bearing them with more resignation. To Temperance he ascribes his long-continued health, and what is still left to him of a good constitution; to Industry and Frugality, the easiness of his circumstances and acquisition of his fortune, with all that knowledge that enabled him to be a useful citizen, and obtained for him some degree of reputation among the learned; to Sincerity and Justice, the confidence of his country, and the honorable employment it conferred upon him; and to the joint influence of the whole mass of the

virtues, even in the imperfect state he was able to acquire them, all that evenness of temper, and that cheerfulness in conversation, which makes his company still sought for, and agreeable even to his younger acquaintance. I hope, therefore, that some of my descendants may follow the example, and reap the benefit.

It will be remarked that, though my scheme was not wholly without religion, there was in it no mark of any of the distinguishing tenets of any particular sect. I had purposely avoided them; for, being fully persuaded of the utility and excellency of my method, and that it might be serviceable to people in all religions, and intending some time or other to publish it, I would not have any thing in it that should prejudice any one, of any sect, against it. I purposed writing a little comment on each virtue, in which I would have shown the advantages of possessing it, and the mischiefs attending its opposite vice; and I should have called my book THE ART of VIRTUE, because it would have shown the means and manner of obtaining virtue, which would have distinguished it from the mere exhortation to be good, that does not instruct and indicate the means, but is like the apostle's man of verbal charity, who without showing to the naked and hungry how or where they might get clothes or victuals, only exhorted them to be fed and clothed.—James ii. 15, 16.

But it so happened that my intention of writing and publishing this comment was never fulfilled. I did, indeed, from time to time, put down short hints of the sentiments, reasonings, etc., to be made use of in it, some of which I have still by me; but the necessary close attention to private business in the earlier part of my life, and public business since, have occasioned my postponing it; for, it being connected in my mind with *a great and extensive project*, that required the

whole man to execute, and which an unforeseen succession of employments prevented my attending to, it has hitherto remained unfinished.

In this piece it was my design to explain and enforce this doctrine, that vicious actions are not hurtful because they are forbidden, but forbidden because they are hurtful, the nature of man alone considered; that it was, therefore, every one's interest to be virtuous who wished to be happy even in this world; and I should, from this circumstance (there being always in the world a number of rich merchants, nobility, states, and princes, who have need of honest instruments for the management of their affairs, and such being so rare), have endeavored to convince young persons that no qualities were so likely to make a poor man's fortune as those of probity and integrity.

My list of virtues contained at first but twelve; but a Quaker friend having kindly informed me that I was generally thought proud; that my pride showed itself frequently in conversation; that I was not content with being in the right when discussing any point, but was overbearing, and rather insolent, of which he convinced me by mentioning several instances; I determined endeavoring to cure myself, if I could, of this vice or folly among the rest, and I added *Humility* to my list, giving an extensive meaning to the word.

I cannot boast of much success in acquiring the *reality* of this virtue, but I had a good deal with regard to the *appearance* of it. I made it a rule to forbear all direct contradiction to the sentiments of others, and all positive assertion of my own. I even forbade myself, agreeably to the old laws of our Junto, the use of every word or expression in the language that imported a fixed opinion, such as *certainly*, *undoubtedly*, etc., and I adopted, instead of them, *I conceive*, *I apprehend*,

or *I imagine* a thing to be so or so; or it *so appears to me at present.* When another asserted something that I thought an error, I denied myself the pleasure of contradicting him abruptly, and of showing immediately some absurdity in his proposition; and in answering I began by observing that in certain cases or circumstances his opinion would be right, but in the present case there *appeared* or *seemed* to me some difference, etc. I soon found the advantage of this change in my manner; the conversations I engaged in went on more pleasantly. The modest way in which I proposed my opinions procured them a readier reception and less contradiction; I had less mortification when I was found to be in the wrong, and I more easily prevailed with others to give up their mistakes and join with me when I happened to be in the right.

And this mode, which I at first put on with some violence to natural inclination, became at length so easy, and so habitual to me, that perhaps for these fifty years past no one has ever heard a dogmatical expression escape me. And to this habit (after my character of integrity) I think it principally owing that I had early so much weight with my fellow-citizens when I proposed new institutions, or alterations in the old, and so much influence in public councils when I became a member; for I was but a bad speaker, never eloquent, subject to much hesitation in my choice of words, hardly correct in language, and yet I generally carried my points.

In reality, there is, perhaps, no one of our natural passions so hard to subdue as *pride.* Disguise it, struggle with it, beat it down, stifle it, mortify it as much as one pleases, it is still alive, and will every now and then peep out and show itself; you will see it, perhaps, often in this history; for, even if I could conceive that I had completely overcome it, I should probably be proud of my humility.

HAVING mentioned *a great and extensive project* which I had conceived, it seems proper that some account should be here given of that project and its object. Its first rise in my mind appears in the following little paper, accidentally preserved, viz.:

*Observations* on my reading history, in Library, May 19th, 1731.

"That the great affairs of the world, the wars, revolutions, etc., are carried on and effected by parties.

"That the view of these parties is their present general interest, or what they take to be such.

"That the different views of these different parties occasion all confusion.

"That while a party is carrying on a general design, each man has his particular private interest in view.

"That as soon as a party has gained its general point, each member becomes intent upon his particular interest; which, thwarting others, breaks that party into divisions, and occasions more confusion.

"That few in public affairs act from a mere view of the good of their country, whatever they may pretend; and, though their actings bring real good to their country, yet men primarily considered that their own and their country's interest was united, and did not act from a principle of benevolence.

"That fewer still, in public affairs, act with a view to the good of mankind.

"There seems to me at present to be great occasion for raising a United party for Virtue, by forming the virtuous and

good men of all nations into a regular body, to be governed by suitable good and wise rulers, to whom good and wise men may probably be more unanimous in their obedience than common people are to common laws.

"I at present think that whoever attempts this aright, and is well qualified, cannot fail of pleasing God, and of meeting with success.

B. F."

Revolving this project in my mind, as to be undertaken hereafter, when my circumstances should afford me the necessary leisure, I put down from time to time, on pieces of paper, such thoughts as occurred to me respecting it. Most of these are lost; but I find one purporting to be the substance of an intended creed, containing, as I thought, the essentials of every known religion, and being free of everything that might shock the professors of any religion. It is expressed in these words, viz.:

"That there is one God, who made all things.

"That he governs the world by his providence.

"That he ought to be worshipped by adoration, prayer, and thanksgiving.

"But that the most acceptable service of God is doing good to man.

"That the soul is immortal.

"And that God will certainly reward virtue and punish vice, either here or hereafter."

My ideas at that time were, that the sect should be begun and spread at first among young and single men only; that each person to be initiated should not only declare his assent to such creed, but should have exercised himself with the thirteen weeks' examination and practice of the virtues, as in the before-mentioned model; that the existence of such a

society should be kept a secret, till it was become considerable, to prevent solicitations for the admission of improper persons, but that the members should each of them search among his acquaintance for ingenuous, well-disposed youths, to whom, with prudent caution, the scheme should be gradually communicated; that the members should engage to afford their advice, assistance, and support to each other in promoting one another's interests, business, and advancement in life; that, for distinction, we should be called the *Society of the Free and Easy:* free, as being, by the general practice and habit of the virtues, free from the dominion of vice; and particularly by the practice of industry and frugality, free from debt, which exposes a man to confinement, and a species of slavery to his creditors.

This is as much as I can now recollect of the project, except that I communicated it in part to two young men, who adopted it with some enthusiasm; but my then narrow circumstances, and the necessity I was under of sticking close to my business, occasioned my postponing the further prosecution of it at that time; and my multifarious occupations, public and private, induced me to continue postponing, so that it has been omitted till I have no longer strength or activity left sufficient for such an enterprise; though I am still of opinion that it was a practicable scheme, and might have been very useful, by forming a great number of good citizens; and I was not discouraged by the seeming magnitude of the undertaking, as I have always thought that one man of tolerable abilities may work great changes, and accomplish great affairs among mankind, if he first forms a good plan, and, cutting off all amusements or other employments that would divert his attention, makes the execution of that same plan his sole study and business.

In 1732 I first published my Almanac, under the name of *Richard Saunders*; it was continued by me about twenty-five years, commonly called *Poor Richard's Almanac.* I endeavored to make it both entertaining and useful, and it accordingly came to be in such demand, that I reaped considerable profit from it, vending annually near ten thousand. And observing that it was generally read, scarce any neighborhood in the province being without it, I considered it as a proper vehicle for conveying instruction among the common people, who bought scarcely any other books; I therefore filled all the little spaces that occurred between the remarkable days in the calendar with proverbial sentences, chiefly such as inculcated industry and frugality, as the means of procuring wealth, and thereby securing virtue; it being more difficult for a man in want, to act always honestly, as, to use here one of those proverbs, *it is hard for an empty sack to stand upright.*

These proverbs, which contained the wisdom of many ages and nations, I assembled and formed into a connected discourse prefixed to the Almanac of 1757, as the harangue of a wise old man to the people attending an auction.

[Some Sayings of Poor Richard.

"Diligence is the mother of good luck."

"Wealth is not his that has it, but his that enjoys it."

"Who has deceived thee so oft as thyself?"

"Fly pleasures, and they will follow you."

"There are no gains without pains."

"Dost thou love life, then do not squander time, for that is the stuff life is made of."

"God helps them that help themselves."

"Lying rides on Debt's back."

"Three can keep a secret if two of them are dead."

"The sleeping fox catches no poultry; there will be sleeping enough in the grave."

"He that can have patience can have what he will."

"Want of care does more harm than want of knowledge."]

The bringing all these scattered counsels thus into a focus enabled them to make greater impression. The piece, being universally approved, was copied in all the newspapers of the Continent; reprinted in Britain on a broadside, to be stuck up in houses; two translations were made of it in French, and great numbers bought by the clergy and gentry, to distribute gratis among their poor parishioners and tenants. In Pennsylvania, as it discouraged useless expense in foreign superfluities, some thought it had its share of influence in producing that growing plenty of money which was observable for several years after its publication.

I considered my newspaper, also, as another means of communicating instruction, and in that view frequently reprinted in it extracts from the Spectator, and other moral writers; and sometimes published little pieces of my own, which had been first composed for reading in our Junto. Of these are a Socratic dialogue, tending to prove that, whatever might be his parts and abilities, a vicious man could not properly be called a man of sense; and a discourse on self-denial, showing that virtue was not secure till its practice became a habit, and was free from the opposition of contrary inclinations. These may be found in the papers about the beginning of 1735.

In the conduct of my newspaper, I carefully excluded all libeling and personal abuse, which is of late years become so disgraceful to our country. Whenever I was solicited to insert any thing of that kind, and the writers pleaded, as they generally did, the liberty of the press, and that a newspaper

was like a stage-coach, in which any one who would pay had a right to a place, my answer was that I would print the piece separately if desired, and the author might have as many copies as he pleased to distribute himself, but that I would not take upon me to spread his detraction; and that, having contracted with my subscribers to furnish them with what might be either useful or entertaining, I could not fill their papers with private altercation, in which they had no concern, without doing them manifest injustice. Now, many of our printers make no scruple of gratifying the malice of individuals by false accusations of the fairest characters among ourselves, augmenting animosity even to the producing of duels; and are, moreover, so indiscreet as to print scurrilous reflections on the government of neighboring states, and even on the conduct of our best national allies, which may be attended with the most pernicious consequences. These things I mention as a caution to young printers, and that they may be encouraged not to pollute their presses and disgrace their profession by such infamous practices, but refuse steadily, as they may see by my example that such a course of conduct will not, on the whole, be injurious to their interests.

In 1733 I sent one of my journeymen to Charleston, South Carolina, where a printer was wanting. I furnished him with a press and letters, on an agreement of partnership, by which I was to receive one-third of the profits of the business, paying one-third of the expense. He was a man of learning, and honest but ignorant in matters of account; and, though he sometimes made me remittances, I could get no account from him, nor any satisfactory state of our partnership while he lived. On his decease, the business was continued by his widow, who, being born and bred in Holland, where, as I have been informed, the knowledge of accounts makes a part

of female education, she not only sent me as clear a statement as she could find of the transactions past, but continued to account with the greatest regularity and exactness every quarter afterwards, and managed the business with such success, that she not only brought up reputably a family of children, but, at the expiration of the term, was able to purchase of me the printing-house, and establish her son in it.

I mention this affair chiefly for the sake of recommending that branch of education for our young females, as likely to be of more use to them and their children, in case of widowhood, than either music or dancing, by preserving them from losses by imposition of crafty men, and enabling them to continue, perhaps, a profitable mercantile house, with established correspondence, till a son is grown up fit to undertake and go on with it, to the lasting advantage and enriching of the family.

About the year 1734 there arrived among us from Ireland a young Presbyterian preacher, named Hemphill, who delivered with a good voice, and apparently extempore, most excellent discourses, which drew together considerable numbers of different persuasions, who joined in admiring them. Among the rest, I became one of his constant hearers, his sermons pleasing me, as they had little of the dogmatical kind, but inculcated strongly the practice of virtue, or what in the religious style are called good works. Those, however, of our congregation, who considered themselves as orthodox Presbyterian, disapproved his doctrine, and were joined by most of the old clergy, who arraigned him of heterodoxy before the synod, in order to have him silenced. I became his zealous partisan, and contributed all I could to raise a party in his favor, and we combated for him a while with some hopes of success. There was much scribbling pro and con upon the occasion; and finding that, though an elegant

preacher, he was but a poor writer, I lent him my pen and wrote for him two or three pamphlets, and one piece in the *Gazette* of April, 1735. Those pamphlets, as is generally the case with controversial writings, though eagerly read at the time, were soon out of vogue, and I question whether a single copy of them now exists.

During the contest an unlucky occurrence hurt his cause exceedingly. One of our adversaries having heard him preach a sermon that was much admired, thought he had somewhere read the sermon before, or at least a part of it. On search, he found that part quoted at length, in one of the British Reviews, from a discourse of Dr. Foster's. This detection gave many of our party disgust, who accordingly abandoned his cause, and occasioned our more speedy discomfiture in the synod. I stuck by him, however, as I rather approved his giving us good sermons composed by others, than bad ones of his own manufacture, though the latter was the practice of our common teachers. He afterward acknowledged to me that none of those he preached were his own; adding, that his memory was such as enabled him to retain and repeat any sermon after one reading only. On our defeat, he left us in search elsewhere of better fortune, and I quitted the congregation, never joining it after, though I continued many years my subscription for the support of its ministers.

[If Franklin did not attend church afterward, his wife did, as the following advertisement in *The Pennsylvania Gazette* for June 23, 1737, will show:—

"Taken out of a pew in the church some months since, a common Prayer Book, bound in red, gilt, and lettered D. F. [Deborah Franklin] on each cover. The person who took it is desired to open it, and read the eighth commandment, and afterwards return it into the same pew again; upon which no further notice will be taken."]

I had begun in 1733 to study languages; I soon made myself so much a master of the French as to be able to read the books with ease. I then undertook the Italian. An acquaintance, who was also learning it, used often to tempt me to play chess with him. Finding this took up too much of the time I had to spare for study, I at length refused to play any more, unless on this condition, that the victor in every game should have a right to impose a task, either in parts of the grammar to be got by heart, or in translations, etc., which tasks the vanquished was to perform upon honor, before our next meeting. As we played pretty equally, we thus beat one another into that language. I afterwards, with a little painstaking, acquired as much of the Spanish as to read their books also.

I have already mentioned that I had only one year's instruction in a Latin school, and that when very young, after which I neglected that language entirely. But, when I had attained an acquaintance with the French, Italian, and Spanish, I was surprised to find, on looking over a Latin Testament, that I understood so much more of that language than I had imagined, which encouraged me to apply myself again to the study of it, and I met with more success, as those preceding languages had greatly smoothed my way.

From these circumstances, I have thought that there is some inconsistency in our common mode of teaching languages. We are told that it is proper to begin first with the Latin, and, having acquired that, it will be more easy to attain those modern languages which are derived from it; and yet we do not begin with the Greek, in order more easily to acquire the Latin. It is true that, if you can clamber and get to the top of a staircase without using the steps, you will more easily gain them in descending; but certainly, if you

begin with the lowest you will with more ease ascend to the top; and I would therefore offer it to the consideration of those who superintend the education of our youth, whether, since many of those who begin with the Latin quit the same after spending some years without having made any great proficiency, and what they have learned becomes almost useless, so that their time has been lost, it would not have been better to have begun with the French, proceeding to the Italian, etc.; for, though, after spending the same time, they should quit the study of languages and never arrive at the Latin, they would, however, have acquired another tongue or two, that, being in modern use, might be serviceable to them in common life.

After ten years' absence from Boston, and having become easy in my circumstances, I made a journey thither to visit my relations, which I could not sooner well afford. In returning, I called at Newport to see my brother, then settled there with his printing-house. Our former differences were forgotten, and our meeting was very cordial and affectionate. He was fast declining in his health, and requested of me that, in case of his death, which he apprehended not far distant, I would take home his son, then but ten years of age, and bring him up to the printing business. This I accordingly performed, sending him a few years to school before I took him into the office. His mother carried on the business till he was grown up, when I assisted him with an assortment of new types, those of his father being in a manner worn out. Thus it was that I made my brother ample amends for the service I had deprived him of by leaving him so early.

In 1736 I lost one of my sons, a fine boy of four years old, by the small-pox, taken in the common way. I long regretted bitterly, and still regret that I had not given it to him by

inoculation. This I mention for the sake of parents who omit that operation, on the supposition that they should never forgive themselves if a child died under it; my example showing that the regret may be the same either way, and that, therefore, the safer should be chosen.

Our club, the Junto, was found so useful, and afforded such satisfaction to the members, that several were desirous of introducing their friends, which could not well be done without exceeding what we had settled as a convenient number, viz., twelve. We had from the beginning made it a rule to keep our institution a secret, which was pretty well observed; the intention was to avoid applications of improper persons for admittance, some of whom, perhaps, we might find it difficult to refuse. I was one of those who were against any addition to our number, but, instead of it, made in writing a proposal, that every member separately should endeavor to form a subordinate club, with the same rules respecting queries, etc., and without informing them of the connection with the Junto. The advantages proposed were, the improvement of so many more young citizens by the use of our institutions; our better acquaintance with the general sentiments of the inhabitants on any occasion, as the Junto member might propose what queries we should desire, and was to report to the Junto what passed in his separate club; the promotion of our particular interests in business by more extensive recommendation, and the increase of our influence in public affairs, and our power of doing good by spreading through the several clubs the sentiments of the Junto.

The project was approved, and every member undertook to form his club, but they did not all succeed. Five or six only were completed, which were called by different names, as the Vine, the Union, the Band, etc. They were useful to

themselves, and afforded us a good deal of amusement, information, and instruction, besides answering, in some considerable degree, our views of influencing the public opinion on particular occasions, of which I shall give some instances in course of time as they happened.

## FRANKLIN IS CHOSEN CLERK OF THE LEGISLATURE, AND APPOINTED DEPUTY POSTMASTER-GENERAL

My first promotion was my being chosen, in 1736, clerk of the General Assembly. The choice was made that year without opposition; but the year following, when I was again proposed (the choice, like that of the members, being annual), a new member made a long speech against me in order to favor some other candidate. I was, however, chosen, which was the more agreeable to me, as, besides the pay for the immediate service as clerk, the place gave me a better opportunity of keeping up an interest among the members, which secured to me the business of printing the votes, laws, paper money, and other occasional jobs for the public, that, on the whole, were very profitable.

I therefore did not like the opposition of this new member, who was a gentleman of fortune and education, with talents that were likely to give him, in time, great influence in the House, which, indeed, afterwards happened. I did not, however, aim at gaining his favor by paying any servile respect to him, but, after some time, took this other method. Having heard that he had in his library a certain very scarce and curious book, I wrote a note to him, expressing my desire of perusing that book, and requesting he would do me the favor of lending it to me for a few days. He sent it immediately,

and I returned it in about a week with another note, expressing strongly my sense of the favor. When we next met in the House, he spoke to me (which he had never done before), and with great civility; and he ever after manifested a readiness to serve me on all occasions, so that we became great friends, and our friendship continued to his death. This is another instance of the truth of an old maxim I had learned, which says, "*He that has once done you a kindness will be more ready to do you another, than he whom you yourself have obliged.*" And it shows how much more profitable it is prudently to remove, than to resent, return, and continue inimical proceedings.

In 1737, Colonel Spotswood, late governor of Virginia, and then postmaster-general, being dissatisfied with the conduct of his deputy at Philadelphia, respecting some negligence in rendering, and inexactitude of his accounts, took from him the commission and offered it to me. I accepted it readily, and found it of great advantage; for, though the salary was small, it facilitated the correspondence that improved my newspaper, increased the number demanded, as well as the advertisements to be inserted, so that it came to afford me a considerable income. My old competitor's newspaper declined proportionably, and I was satisfied without retaliating his refusal, while postmaster, to permit my papers being carried by riders. Thus he suffered greatly from his neglect in due accounting; and I mention it as a lesson to those young men who may be employed in managing affairs for others, that they should always render accounts, and make remittances, with great clearness and punctuality. The character of observing such a conduct is the most powerful of all recommendations to new employments and increase of business.

I began now to turn my thoughts a little to public affairs,

beginning, however, with small matters. The city watch was one of the first things that I conceived to want regulation. It was managed by the constables of the respective wards in turn; the constable warned a number of housekeepers to attend him for the night. Those who chose never to attend, paid him six shillings a year to be excused, which was supposed to be for hiring substitutes, but was, in reality, much more than was necessary for that purpose, and made the constableship a place of profit; and the constable, for a little drink, often got such ragamuffins about him as a watch, that respectable housekeepers did not choose to mix with. Walking the rounds, too, was often neglected, and most of the nights spent in tippling. I thereupon wrote a paper to be read in Junto, representing these irregularities, but insisting more particularly on the inequality of this six-shilling tax of the constables, respecting the circumstances of those who paid it, since a poor widow housekeeper, all whose property to be guarded by the watch did not perhaps exceed the value of fifty pounds, paid as much as the wealthiest merchant, who had thousands of pounds' worth of goods in his stores.

On the whole, I proposed as a more effectual watch, the hiring of proper men to serve constantly in that business: and as a more equitable way of supporting the charge, the levying a tax that should be proportioned to the property. This idea, being approved by the Junto, was communicated to the other clubs, but as arising in each of them; and though the plan was not immediately carried into execution, yet, by preparing the minds of people for the change, it paved the way for the law obtained a few years after, when the members of our clubs were grown into more influence.

About this time I wrote a paper (first to be read in Junto, but it was afterward published) on the different accidents

and carelessness by which houses were set on fire, with cautions against them, and means proposed of avoiding them. This was much spoken of as a useful piece, and gave rise to a project, which soon followed it, of forming a company for the more ready extinguishing of fires, and mutual assistance in removing and securing of goods when in danger. Associates in this scheme were presently found, amounting to thirty. Our articles of agreement obliged every member to keep always in good order, and fit for use, a certain number of leather buckets, with strong bags and baskets (for packing and transporting of goods), which were to be brought to every fire; and we agreed to meet once a month and spend a social evening together, in discoursing and communicating such ideas as occurred to us upon the subject of fires, as might be useful in our conduct on such occasions.

The utility of this instituion soon appeared, and many more desiring to be admitted than we thought convenient for one company, they were advised to form another, which was accordingly done; and this went on, one new company being formed after another, till they became so numerous as to include most of the inhabitants who were men of property; and now, at the time of my writing this, though upward of fifty years since its establishment, that which I first formed, called the Union Fire Company, still subsists and flourishes, though the first members are all deceased but myself and one, who is older by a year than I am. The small fines that have been paid by members for absence at the monthly meetings have been applied to the purchase of fire-engines, ladders, fire-hooks, and other useful implements for each company, so that I question whether there is a city in the world better provided with the means of putting a stop to beginning conflagrations: and, in fact, since these institu-

tions, the city has never lost by fire more than one or two houses at a time, and the flames have often been extinguished before the house in which they began has been half consumed.

In 1739 arrived among us from Ireland the Reverend Mr. Whitefield, who had made himself remarkable there as an itinerant preacher. He was at first permitted to preach in some of our churches; but the clergy, taking a dislike to him, soon refused him their pulpits, and he was obliged to preach in the fields. The multitudes of all sects and denominations that attended his sermons were enormous, and it was matter of speculation to me, who was one of the number, to observe the extraordinary influence of his oratory on his hearers, and how much they admired and respected him, notwithstanding his common abuse of them, by assuring them they were naturally *half beasts and half devils*. It was wonderful to see the change soon made in the manners of our inhabitants. From being thoughtless or indifferent about religion, it seemed as if all the world were growing religious, so that one could not walk through the town in an evening without hearing psalms sung in different families of every street.

And it being found inconvenient to assemble in the open air, subject to its inclemencies, the building of a house to meet in was no sooner proposed, and persons appointed to receive contributions, but sufficient sums were soon received to procure the ground and erect the building, which was one hundred feet long and seventy broad, about the size of Westminster Hall; and the work was carried on with such spirit as to be finished in a much shorter time than could have been expected. Both house and ground were vested in trustees, expressly for the use of any preacher of any religious persuasion who might desire to say something to the people at Philadelphia; the design in building not being to accommodate

any particular sect, but the inhabitants in general; so that even if the Mufti of Constantinople were to send a missionary to preach Mohammedanism to us, he would find a pulpit at his service.

Mr. Whitefield, in leaving us, went preaching all the way through the colonies to Georgia. The settlement of that province had lately been begun, but, instead of being made with hardy, industrious husbandmen, accustomed to labor, the only people fit for such an enterprise, it was with families of broken shop-keepers and other insolvent debtors, many of indolent and idle habits, taken out of the jails, who, being set down in the woods, unqualified for clearing land, and unable to endure the hardships of a new settlement, perished in numbers, leaving many helpless children unprovided for. The sight of their miserable situation inspired the benevolent heart of Mr. Whitefield with the idea of building an Orphan House there, in which they might be supported and educated. Returning northward, he preached up this charity, and made large collections, for his eloquence had a wonderful power over the hearts and purses of his hearers, of which I myself was an instance.

I did not disapprove of the design, but, as Georgia was then destitute of materials and workmen, and it was proposed to send them from Philadelphia at a great expense, I thought it would have been better to have built the house here, and brought the children to it. This I advised; but he was resolute in his first project, rejected my counsel, and I therefore refused to contribute. I happened soon after to attend one of his sermons, in the course of which I perceived he intended to finish with a collection, and I silently resolved he should get nothing from me. I had in my pocket a handful of copper money, three or four silver dollars, and five pistoles in gold.

As he proceeded I began to soften, and concluded to give the coppers. Another stroke of his oratory made me ashamed of that, and determined me to give the silver; and he finished so admirably, that I emptied my pocket wholly into the collector's dish, gold and all. At this sermon there was also one of our club, who, being of my sentiments respecting the building in Georgia, and suspecting a collection might be intended, had, by precaution, emptied his pockets before he came from home. Towards the conclusion of the discourse, however, he felt a strong desire to give, and applied to a neighbor, who stood near him, to borrow some money for the purpose. The application was unfortunately made to perhaps the only man in the company who had the firmness not to be affected by the preacher. His answer was, "*At any other time, Friend Hopkinson, I would lend to thee freely; but not now, for thee seems to be out of thy right senses.*"

Some of Mr. Whitefield's enemies affected to suppose that he would apply these collections to his own private emolument; but I, who was intimately acquainted with him (being employed in printing his Sermons and Journals, etc.), never had the least suspicion of his integrity, but am to this day decidedly of opinion that he was in all his conduct a perfectly *honest man*; and methinks my testimony in his favor ought to have the more weight, as we had no religious connection. He used, indeed, sometimes to pray for my conversion, but never had the satisfaction of believing that his prayers were heard. Ours was a mere civil friendship, sincere on both sides, and lasted to his death.

The last time I saw Mr. Whitefield was in London, when he consulted me about his Orphan House concern, and his purpose of appropriating it to the establishment of a college.

He had a loud and clear voice, and articulated his words and sentences so perfectly, that he might be heard and understood at a great distance, especially as his auditories, however numerous, observed the most exact silence. He preached one evening from the top of the Court-House steps, which are in the middle of Market-street, and on the west side of Second-street, which crosses it at right angles. Both streets were filled with his hearers to a considerable distance. Being among the hindmost in Market-street, I had the curiosity to learn how far he could be heard, by retiring backwards down the street towards the river; and I found his voice distinct till I came near Front-street, when some noise in that street obscured it. Imagining then a semicircle, of which my distance should be the radius, and that it were filled with auditors, to each of whom I allowed two square feet, I computed that he might well be heard by more than thirty thousand. This reconciled me to the newspaper accounts of his having preached to twenty-five thousand people in the fields, and to the ancient histories of generals haranguing whole armies, of which I had sometimes doubted.

By hearing him often, I came to distinguish easily between sermons newly composed, and those which he had often preached in the course of his travels. His delivery of the latter was so improved by frequent repetitions that every accent, every emphasis, every modulation of voice, was so perfectly well turned and well placed, that, without being interested in the subject, one could not help being pleased with the discourse; a pleasure of much the same kind with that received from an excellent piece of music. This is an advantage itinerant preachers have over those who are stationary, as the latter cannot well improve their delivery of a sermon by so many rehearsals.

His writing and printing from time to time gave great advantage to his enemies; unguarded expressions, and even erroneous opinions, delivered in preaching, might have been afterwards explained or qualified by supposing others that might have accompanied them, or they might have been denied; but *litera scripta manet*. Critics attacked his writings violently, and with so much appearance of reason as to diminish the number of his votaries and prevent their increase; so that I am of opinion if he had never written any thing, he would have left behind him a much more numerous and important sect, and his reputation might in that case have been still growing, even after his death, as there being nothing of his writing on which to found a censure and give him a lower character, his proselytes would be left at liberty to feign for him as great a variety of excellences as their enthusiastic admiration might wish him to have possessed.

My business was now continually augmenting, and my circumstances growing daily easier, my newspaper having become very profitable, as being for a time almost the only one in this and the neighboring provinces. I experienced, too, the truth of the observation, "*that after getting the first hundred pounds, it is more easy to get the second*," money itself being of a prolific nature.

The partnership at Carolina having succeeded, I was encouraged to engage in others, and to promote several of my workmen, who had behaved well, by establishing them with printing-houses in different colonies, on the same terms with that in Carolina. Most of them did well, being enabled at the end of our term, six years, to purchase the types of me and go on working for themselves, by which means several families were raised. Partnerships often finish in quarrels; but I was happy in this, that mine were all carried on and ended

amicably, owing, I think, a good deal to the precaution of having very explicitly settled, in our articles, every thing to be done by or expected from each partner, so that there was nothing to dispute, which precaution I would therefore recommend to all who enter into partnerships; for, whatever esteem partners may have for, and confidence in, each other at the time of the contract, little jealousies and disgusts may arise, with ideas of inequality in the care and burden of the business, etc., which are attended often with breach of friendship and of the connection, perhaps with lawsuits and other disagreeable consequences.

I had, on the whole, abundant reason to be satisfied with my being established in Pennsylvania. There were, however, two things that I regretted, there being no provision for defense, nor for a complete education of youth; no militia, nor any college. I therefore, in 1743, drew up a proposal for establishing an academy; and at that time, thinking the Reverend Mr. Peters, who was out of employ, a fit person to superintend such an institution, I communicated the project to him; but he, having more profitable views in the service of the proprietaries, which succeeded, declined the undertaking; and, not knowing another at that time suitable for such a trust, I let the scheme lie a while dormant. I succeeded better the next year, 1744, in proposing and establishing a Philosophical Society. The paper I wrote for that purpose will be found among my writings, when collected.

With respect to defense, Spain having been several years at war against Great Britain, and being at length joined by France, which brought us into great danger; and the labored and long-continued endeavor of our governor, Thomas, to prevail with our Quaker Assembly to pass a militia law, and make other provisions for the security of the province, having

proved abortive, I determined to try what might be done by a voluntary association of the people. To promote this, I first wrote and published a pamphlet, entitled PLAIN TRUTH, in which I stated our defenseless situation in strong lights, with the necessity of union and discipline for our defense, and promised to propose in a few days an association, to be generally signed for that purpose. The pamphlet had a sudden and surprising effect. I was called upon for the instrument of association, and having settled the draft of it with a few friends, I appointed a meeting of the citizens in the large building before mentioned. The house was pretty full; I had prepared a number of printed copies, and provided pens and ink dispersed all over the room. I harangued them a little on the subject, read the paper, and explained it, and then distributed the copies, which were eagerly signed, not the least objection being made.

When the company separated, and the papers were collected, we found about twelve hundred hands; and other copies being dispersed in the country, the subscribers amounted at length to upward of ten thousand. These all furnished themselves as soon as they could with arms, formed themselves into companies and regiments, chose their own officers, and met every week to be instructed in the manual exercise, and other parts of military discipline. The women, by subscriptions among themselves, provided silk colors, which they presented to the companies, painted with different devices and mottoes, which I supplied.

The officers of the companies composing the Philadelphia regiment, being met, chose me for their colonel; but, conceiving myself unfit, I declined that station, and recommended Mr. Lawrence, a fine person, and man of influence, who was accordingly appointed. I then proposed a lottery to

defray the expense of building a battery below the town, and furnishing it with cannon. It filled expeditiously, and the battery was soon erected, the merlons being framed of logs and filled with earth. We bought some old cannon from Boston, but, these not being sufficient, we wrote to England for more, soliciting, at the same time, our proprietaries for some assistance, though without much expectation of obtaining it.

Meanwhile, Colonel Lawrence, William Allen, Abram Taylor, Esq., and myself were sent to New York by the associators, commissioned to borrow some cannon of Governor Clinton. He at first refused us peremptorily; but at dinner with his council, where there was great drinking of Madeira wine, as the custom of that place then was, he softened by degrees, and said he would lend us six. After a few more bumpers he advanced to ten; and at length he very good-naturedly conceded eighteen. They were fine cannon, eighteen-pounders, with their carriages, which we soon transported and mounted on our battery, where the associators kept a nightly guard while the war lasted, and among the rest I regularly took my turn of duty there as a common soldier.

My activity in these operations was agreeable to the governor and council; they took me into confidence, and I was consulted by them in every measure wherein their concurrence was thought useful to the association. Calling in the aid of religion, I proposed to them the proclaiming a fast, to promote reformation, and implore the blessing of Heaven on our undertaking. They embraced the motion; but, as it was the first fast ever thought of in the province, the secretary had no precedent from which to draw the proclamation. My education in New England, where a fast is proclaimed every

year, was here of some advantage: I drew it in the accustomed style, it was translated into German, printed in both languages, and divulged through the province. This gave the clergy of the different sects an opportunity of influencing their congregation to join in the association, and it would probably have been general among all but Quakers if the peace had not soon intervened.

It was thought by some of my friends that, by my activity in these affairs, I should offend that sect, and thereby lose my interest in the Assembly of the province, where they formed a great majority. A young gentleman who had likewise some friends in the House, and wished to succeed me as their clerk, acquainted me that it was decided to displace me at the next election; and he, therefore, in good will, advised me to resign, as more consistent with my honor than being turned out. My answer to him was, that I had read or heard of some public man who made it a rule never to ask for an office, and never to refuse one when offered to him. "I approve," says I, "of his rule, and will practice it with a small addition: I shall never *ask*, never *refuse*, nor ever *resign* an office. If they will have my office of clerk to dispose of to another, they shall take it from me. I will not, by giving it up, lose my right of some time or other making reprisals on my adversaries." I heard, however, no more of this; I was chosen again unanimously as usual at the next election. Possibly, as they disliked my late intimacy with the members of council, who had joined the governors in all the disputes about military preparations, with which the House had long been harassed, they might have been pleased if I would voluntarily have left them; but they did not care to displace me merely on account of my zeal for the association, and they could not well give another reason.

Indeed I had some cause to believe that the defense of the country was not disagreeable to any of them, provided they were not required to assist in it. And I found that a much greater number of them than I could have imagined, though against offensive war, were clearly for the defensive. Many pamphlets *pro* and *con* were published on the subject, and some by good Quakers, in favor of defense, which I believe convinced most of their younger people.

A transaction in our fire company gave me some insight into their prevailing sentiments. It had been proposed that we should encourage the scheme for building a battery by laying out the present stock, then about sixty pounds, in tickets of the lottery. By our rules, no money could be disposed of till the next meeting after the proposal. The company consisted of thirty members, of which twenty-two were Quakers, and eight only of other persuasions. We eight punctually attended the meeting; but, though we thought that some of the Quakers would join us, we were by no means sure of a majority. Only one Quaker, Mr. James Morris, appeared to oppose the measure. He expressed much sorrow that it had ever been proposed, as he said *Friends* were all against it, and it would create such discord as might break up the company. We told him that we saw no reason for that; we were the minority, and if *Friends* were against the measure, and out-voted us, we must and should, agreeably to the usage of all societies, submit. When the hour for business arrived it was moved to put the vote; he allowed we might then do it by the rules, but, as he could assure us that a number of members intended to be present for the purpose of opposing it, it would be but candid to allow a little time for their appearing.

While we were disputing this, a waiter came to tell me two

gentlemen below desired to speak with me. I went down, and found they were two of our Quaker members. They told me there were eight of them assembled at a tavern just by; that they were determined to come and vote with us if there should be occasion, which they hoped would not be the case, and desired we would not call for their assistance if we could do without it, as their voting for such a measure might embroil them with their elders and friends. Being thus secure of a majority, I went up, and after a little seeming hesitation, agreed to a delay of another hour. This Mr. Morris allowed to be extremely fair. Not one of his opposing friends appeared, at which he expressed great surprise; and, at the expiration of the hour, we carried the resolution eight to one; and as, of the twenty-two Quakers, eight were ready to vote with us, and thirteen, by their absence, manifested that they were not inclined to oppose the measure, I afterwards estimated the proportion of Quakers sincerely against defense as one to twenty-one only; for these were all regular members of that society, and in good reputation among them, and had due notice of what was proposed at that meeting.

The honorable and learned Mr. Logan, who had always been of that sect, was one who wrote an address to them, declaring his approbation of defensive war, and supporting his opinion by many strong arguments. He put into my hands sixty pounds to be laid out in lottery tickets for the battery, with directions to apply what prizes might be drawn wholly to that service. He told me the following anecdote of his old master, William Penn, respecting defense. He came over from England, when a young man, with that proprietary, and as his secretary. It was war-time, and their ship was chased by an armed vessel, supposed to be an enemy. Their captain prepared for defense; but told William Penn, and his

company of Quakers, that he did not expect their assistance, and they might retire into the cabin, which they did, except James Logan, who chose to stay upon deck, and was quartered to a gun. The supposed enemy proved a friend, so there was no fighting; but when the secretary went down to communicate the intelligence, William Penn rebuked him severely for staying upon deck, and undertaking to assist in defending the vessel, contrary to the principles of *Friends*, especially as it had not been required by the captain. This reproof, being before all the company, piqued the secretary, who answered, "*I being thy servant, why did thee not order me to come down? But thee was willing enough that I should stay and help to fight the ship when thee thought there was danger.*"

My being many years in the Assembly, the majority of which were constantly Quakers, gave me frequent opportunities of seeing the embarrassment given them by their principle against war, whenever application was made to them, by order of the crown, to grant aids for military purposes. They were unwilling to offend government, on the one hand, by a direct refusal; and their friends, the body of the Quakers, on the other, by a compliance contrary to their principles; hence a variety of evasions to avoid complying, and modes of disguising the compliance when it became unavoidable. The common mode at last was, to grant money under the phrase of its being "*for the king's use*," and never to inquire how it was applied.

But, if the demand was not directly from the crown, that phrase was found not so proper, and some other was to be invented. As, when powder was wanting (I think it was for the garrison at Louisburg), and the government of New England solicited a grant of some from Pennsylvania, which was

much urged on the House by Governor Thomas, they could not grant money to buy powder, because that was an ingredient of war; but they voted an aid to New England of three thousand pounds, to be put into the hands of the governor, and appropriated it for the purchasing of bread, flour, wheat, or *other grain*. Some of the council, desirous of giving the House still further embarrassment, advised the governor not to accept provision, as not being the thing he had demanded; but he replied, "I shall take the money, for I understand very well their meaning; other grain is gunpowder," which he accordingly bought, and they never objected to it.

It was in allusion to this fact that, when in our fire company we feared the success of our proposal in favor of the lottery, and I had said to my friend Mr. Syng, one of our members, "If we fail, let us move the purchase of a fire-engine with the money; the Quakers can have no objection to that; and then, if you nominate me and I you as a committee for that purpose, we will buy a great gun, which is certainly a *fire-engine*." "I see," says he, "you have improved by being so long in the Assembly; your equivocal project would be just a match for their wheat or *other grain*."

These embarrassments that the Quakers suffered from having established and published it as one of their principles that no kind of war was lawful, and which, being once published, they could not afterwards, however they might change their minds, easily get rid of, reminds me of what I think a more prudent conduct in another sect among us, that of the Dunkers. I was acquainted with one of its founders, Michael Welfare, soon after it appeared. He complained to me that they were grievously calumniated by the zealots of other persuasions, and charged with abominable principles

and practices, to which they were utter strangers. I told him this had always been the case with new sects, and that, to put a stop to such abuse, I imagined it might be well to publish the articles of their belief, and the rules of their discipline. He said that it had been proposed among them, but not agreed to, for this reason: "When we were first drawn together as a society," says he, "it had pleased God to enlighten our minds so far as to see that some doctrines, which we once esteemed truths, were errors; and that others, which we had esteemed errors, were real truths. From time to time He had been pleased to afford us further light, and our principles have been improving, and our errors diminishing. Now we are not sure that we are arrived at the end of this progression, and at the perfection of spiritual or theological knowledge; and we fear that, if we should once print our confession of faith, we should feel ourselves as if bound and confined by it, and perhaps be unwilling to receive further improvement, and our successors still more so, as conceiving what we their elders and founders had done, to be something sacred, never to be departed from."

This modesty in a sect is perhaps a singular instance in the history of mankind, every other sect supposing itself in possession of all truth, and that those who differ are so far in the wrong; like a man traveling in foggy weather, those at some distance before him on the road he sees wrapped up in the fog, as well as those behind him, and also the people in the fields on each side, but near him all appears clear, though in truth he is as much in the fog as any of them. To avoid this kind of embarrassment, the Quakers have of late years been gradually declining the public service in the Assembly and in the magistracy, choosing rather to quit their power than their principle.

In order of time, I should have mentioned before, that having, in 1742, invented an open stove for the better warming of rooms, and at the same time saving fuel, as the fresh air admitted was warmed in entering, I made a present of the model to Mr. Robert Grace, one of my early friends, who, having an iron-furnace, found the casting of the plates for these stoves a profitable thing, as they were growing in demand. To promote that demand, I wrote and published a pamphlet, entitled "*An Account of the new-invented Pennsylvania Fireplaces; wherein their Construction and Manner of Operation is particularly explained; their Advantages above every other Method of warming Rooms demonstrated; and all Objections that have been raised against the Use of them answered and obviated,*" etc. This pamphlet had a good effect. Governor Thomas was so pleased with the construction of this stove, as described in it, that he offered to give me a patent for the sole vending of them for a term of years; but I declined it from a principle which has ever weighed with me on such occasions, viz., *That, as we enjoy great advantages from the inventions of others, we should be glad of an opportunity to serve others by any invention of ours; and this we should do freely and generously.*

An ironmonger in London, however, assuming a good deal of my pamphlet, and working it up into his own, and making some small changes in the machine, which rather hurt its operation, got a patent for it there, and made, as I was told, a little fortune by it. And this is not the only instance of patents taken out for my inventions by others, though not always with the same success, which I never contested, as having no desire of profiting by patents myself, and hating disputes. The use of these fireplaces in very many houses,

both of this and the neighboring colonies, has been, and is, a great saving of wood to the inhabitants.

Peace being concluded, and the association business therefore at an end, I turned my thoughts again to the affair of establishing an academy. The first step I took was to associate in the design a number of active friends, of whom the Junto furnished a good part; the next was to write and publish a pamphlet, entitled *Proposals relating to the Education of Youth in Pennsylvania*. This I distributed among the principal inhabitants gratis; and as soon as I could suppose their minds a little prepared by the perusal of it, I set on foot a subscription for opening and supporting an academy: it was to be paid in quotas yearly for five years; by so dividing it, I judged the subscription might be larger, and I believe it was so, amounting to no less, if I remember right, than five thousand pounds.

In the introduction to these proposals, I stated their publication, not as an act of mine, but of some *public-spirited gentlemen*, avoiding as much as I could, according to my usual rule, the presenting myself to the public as the author of any scheme for their benefit.

The subscribers, to carry the project into immediate execution, chose out of their number twenty-four trustees, and appointed Mr. Francis, then attorney-general, and myself to draw up constitutions for the government of the academy; which being done and signed, a house was hired, masters engaged, and the schools opened, I think, in the same year, 1749.

The scholars increasing fast, the house was soon found too small, and we were looking out for a piece of ground, properly situated, with intention to build, when Providence threw into our way a large house ready built, which, with a few

alterations, might well serve our purpose. This was the building before mentioned, erected by the hearers of Mr. Whitefield, and was obtained for us in the following manner.

It is to be noted that the contributions to this building being made by people of different sects, care was taken in the nomination of trustees, in whom the building and ground was to be vested, that a predominancy should not be given to any sect, lest in time that predominancy might be a means of appropriating the whole to the use of such sect, contrary to the original intention. It was therefore that one of each sect was appointed, viz., one Church-of-England man, one Presbyterian, one Baptist, one Moravian, etc., those, in case of vacancy by death, were to fill it by election from among the contributors. The Moravian happened not to please his colleagues, and on his death they resolved to have no other of that sect. The difficulty then was, how to avoid having two of some other sect, by means of the new choice.

Several persons were named, and for that reason not agreed to. At length one mentioned me, with the observation that I was merely an honest man, and of no sect at all, which prevailed with them to choose me. The enthusiasm which existed when the house was built had long since abated, and its trustees had not been able to procure fresh contributions for paying the ground-rent, and discharging some other debts the building had occasioned, which embarrassed them greatly. Being now a member of both sets of trustees, that for the building and that for the academy, I had a good opportunity of negotiating with both, and brought them finally to an agreement, by which the trustees for the building were to cede it to those of the academy, the latter undertaking to discharge the debt, to keep forever open in the building a large hall for occasional preachers, according to the

original intention, and maintain a free-school for the instruction of poor children. Writings were accordingly drawn, and on paying the debts the trustees of the academy were put in possession of the premises; and by dividing the great and lofty hall into stories, and different rooms above and below for the several schools, and purchasing some additional ground, the whole was soon made fit for our purpose, and the scholars removed into the building. The care and trouble of agreeing with the workmen, purchasing materials, and superintending the work, fell upon me; and I went through it the more cheerfully, as it did not then interfere with my private business, having the year before taken a very able, industrious, and honest partner, Mr. David Hall, with whose character I was well acquainted, as he had worked for me four years. He took off my hands all care of the printing-office, paying me punctually my share of profits. This partnership continued eighteen years, successfully for us both.

The trustees of the academy, after a while, were incorporated by a charter from the governor; their funds were increased by contributions in Britain and grants of land from the proprietaries, to which the Assembly has since made considerable addition; and thus was established the present University of Philadelphia. I have been continued one of its trustees from the beginning, now near forty years, and have had the very great pleasure of seeing a number of the youth who have received their education in it, distinguished by their improved abilities, serviceable in public stations, and ornaments to their country.

When I disengaged myself, as above mentioned, from private business, I flattered myself that, by the sufficient though moderate fortune I had acquired, I had secured leisure during the rest of my life for philosophical studies

THE FIRST BUILDING OF THE UNIVERSITY OF PHILADELPHIA
Now the University of Pennsylvania

and amusements. I purchased all Dr. Spence's apparatus, who had come from England to lecture here, and I proceeded in my electrical experiments with great alacrity.

[Up to 1745 the science of electricity had made but very slight progress, but that year a Dutch gentleman, while experimenting at Leyden, Holland, with an electrified bottle of water, received, says Parton, "An Electric Shock, the first ever given to mortal man by artificial means." This suggested the invention of the Leyden jar or "magical bottle" as it was then often called—a contrivance for storing electricity which led to great advances in the science.

Franklin was never weary of experimenting with this wonderful jar, and in 1748 wrote to his friend Collinson, describing some of the things he did for the entertainment of himself and friends. He had contrived a picture of King George II. ("God preserve him!") with a little movable gilt crown. When the picture was electrified, any one attempting to remove the crown received, as Franklin said, "a terrible blow," so that "if the picture were highly charged, the consequences might perhaps be as fatal as that of high treason."

He closes the letter with an account of a proposed electrical feast, in which he says, "A turkey is to be killed for our dinner by the *electrical shock*, and roasted by the *electrical jack* [a revolving spit] before a fire kindled by the *electrified bottle* [Leyden jar]; when the healths of all the famous electricians of Holland, England, France, and Germany are to be drunk in *electrified bumpers*, under the discharge of guns from the *electrical battery*."

Writing at a later date, Franklin says: "I have lately made an experiment in electricity that I desire never to repeat. Two nights ago, being about to kill a turkey by the shock from two large glass jars, containing as much electrical

fire as forty common phials, I inadvertently took the whole through my arms and body. . . . The company present . . . say that the flash was very great, and the crack as loud as a pistol; yet, my senses being instantly gone, I neither saw the one nor heard the other, nor did I feel the stroke on my hand . . . by which you may judge of the quickness of electrical fire, which by this instance seems to be greater than that of sound, light, or animal sensation. . . . What I can remember of the matter is, that I was about to try whether the bottle or jar were fully charged. . . . I then felt what I know not well how to describe, *a universal blow throughout my whole body, from head to foot, which seemed within as well as without*; after which, the first thing I took notice of was a violent quick shaking of my body, which gradually remitting, my senses as gradually returned. . . . That part of my hand and finger which held the chain [connected with the jar] was left white, as though the blood had been driven out, and remained so eight or ten minutes after, feeling like dead flesh; and I had a numbness in my arms and the back of my neck which continued till the next morning. . . . You may communicate this to Mr Bowdoin, as a caution to him, but do not make it more public, for I am ashamed to have been guilty of so notorious a blunder; a match for that of the Irishman . . . who, being about to steal powder, made a hole in the cask with a *hot iron!*" – *Sparks's Edition of Franklin's Works.*]

The public, now considering me a man of leisure, laid hold of me for their purposes, every part of our civil government, and almost at the same time, imposing some duty upon me.

## FRANKLIN CHOSEN A MEMBER OF THE LEGISLATURE

The governor put me into the commission of the peace; the corporation of the city chose me of the common council, and soon after an alderman; and the citizens at large chose me a burgess to represent them in Assembly. This latter station was the more agreeable to me, as I was at length tired with sitting there to hear debates, in which, as clerk, I could take no part, and which were often so unentertaining that I was induced to amuse myself with making magic squares or circles, or any thing to avoid weariness; and I conceived my becoming a member would enlarge my power of doing good. I would not, however, insinuate that my ambition was not flattered by all these promotions; it certainly was; for, considering my low beginning, they were great things to me; and they were still more pleasing, as being so many spontaneous testimonies of the public good opinion, and by me entirely unsolicited.

The office of justice of the peace I tried a little, by attending a few courts, and sitting on the bench to hear causes; but finding that more knowledge of the common law than I possessed was necessary to act in that station with credit, I gradually withdrew from it, excusing myself by my being obliged to attend the higher duties of a legislator in the Assembly. My election to this trust was repeated every year for ten years, without my ever asking any elector for his vote, or signifying, either directly or indirectly, any desire of being chosen. On taking my seat in the House, my son was appointed their clerk.

The year following, a treaty being to be held with the Indians at Carlisle, the governor sent a message to the House,

proposing that they should nominate some of their members, to be joined with some members of council, as commissioners for that purpose. The House named the speaker (Mr. Norris) and myself; and, being commissioned, we went to Carlisle, and met the Indians accordingly.

As those people are extremely apt to get drunk, and, when so, are very quarrelsome and disorderly, we strictly forbade the selling any liquor to them: and when they complained of this restriction, we told them that if they would continue sober during the treaty, we would give them plenty of rum when business was over. They promised this, and they kept their promise, because they could get no liquor, and the treaty was conducted very orderly, and concluded to mutual satisfaction. They then claimed and received the rum: this was in the afternoon: they were near one hundred men, women, and children, and were lodged in temporary cabins, built in the form of a square, just without the town. In the evening, hearing a great noise among them, the commissioners walked out to see what was the matter. We found they had made a great bonfire in the middle of the square; they were all drunk, men and women, quarreling and fighting. Their dark-colored bodies, half-naked, seen only by the gloomy light of the bonfire, running after and beating one another with firebrands, accompanied by their horrid yellings, formed a scene the most resembling our ideas of hell that could well be imagined: there was no appeasing the tumult, and we retired to our lodging. At midnight a number of them came thundering at our door, demanding more rum, of which we took no notice.

The next day, sensible they had misbehaved in giving us that disturbance, they sent three of their old counselors to make their apology. The orator acknowledged the fault, but

laid it upon the rum; and then endeavored to excuse the rum by saying, "*The Great Spirit, who made all things, made every thing for some use, and whatever use he designed any thing for, that use it should always be put to. Now, when he made rum, he said, 'Let this be for the Indians to get drunk with,' and it must be so.*" And, indeed, if it be the design of Providence to extirpate these savages in order to make room for cultivators of the earth, it seems not improbable that rum may be the appointed means. It has already annihilated all the tribes who formerly inhabited the sea-coast.

In 1751, Dr. Thomas Bond, a particular friend of mine, conceived the idea of establishing a hospital in Philadelphia (a very beneficent design which has been ascribed to me, but was originally his), for the reception and cure of poor sick persons, whether inhabitants of the province or strangers. He was zealous and active in endeavoring to procure subscriptions for it, but the proposal being a novelty in America, and at first not well understood, he met with but small success.

At length he came to me with the compliment that he found there was no such thing as carrying a public-spirited project through without my being concerned in it. "For," says he, "I am often asked by those to whom I propose subscribing, Have you consulted Franklin upon this business? And what does he think of it? And when I tell them that I have not (supposing it rather out of your line), they do not subscribe, but say they will consider of it." I inquired into the nature and probable utility of his scheme, and, receiving from him a very satisfactory explanation, I not only subscribed to it myself, but engaged heartily in the design of procuring subscriptions from others. Previously, however, to the solicitation, I endeavored to prepare the minds of the people by writing on the subject in the

newspapers, which was my usual custom in such cases, but which he had omitted.

The subscriptions afterwards were more free and generous; but, beginning to flag, I saw they would be insufficient without some assistance from the Assembly, and therefore proposed to petition for it, which was done. The country members did not at first relish the project; they objected that it could only be serviceable to the city, and therefore the citizens alone should be at the expense of it; and they doubted whether the citizens themselves generally approved of it. My allegation on the contrary, that it met with such approbation as to leave no doubt of our being able to raise two thousand pounds by voluntary donations, they considered as a most extravagant supposition, and utterly impossible.

On this I formed my plan; and, asking leave to bring in a bill for incorporating the contributors according to the prayer of their petition, and granting them a blank sum of money, which leave was obtained chiefly on the consideration that the House could throw the bill out if they did not like it, I drew it so as to make the important clause a conditional one, viz., "And be it enacted, by the authority aforesaid, that when the said contributors shall have met and chosen their managers and treasurer, *and shall have raised by their contributions a capital stock of* ——— *value* (the yearly interest of which is to be applied to the accommodating of the sick poor in the said hospital, free of charge for diet, attendance, advice, and medicines), *and shall make the same appear to the satisfaction of the speaker of the Assembly for the time being*, that *then* it shall and may be lawful for the said speaker, and he is hereby required, to sign an order on the provincial treasurer for the payment of two thousand pounds, in two yearly payments, to the treasurer of the

THE PENNSYLVANIA HOSPITAL

said hospital, to be applied to the founding, building, and finishing of the same."

This condition carried the bill through; for the members, who had opposed the grant, and now conceived they might have the credit of being charitable without the expense, agreed to its passage; and then, in soliciting subscriptions among the people, we urged the conditional promise of the law as an additional motive to give, since every man's donation would be doubled; thus the clause worked both ways. The subscriptions accordingly soon exceeded the requisite sum, and we claimed and received the public gift, which enabled us to carry the design into execution. A convenient and handsome building was soon erected; the institution has by constant experience been found useful, and flourishes to this day; and I do not remember any of my political manœuvres, the success of which gave me at the time more pleasure, or wherein, after thinking of it, I more easily excused myself for having made some use of cunning.

It was about this time that another projector, the Rev. Gilbert Tennent, came to me with a request that I would assist him in procuring a subscription for erecting a new meeting-house. It was to be for the use of a congregation he had gathered among the Presbyterians, who were originally disciples of Mr. Whitefield. Unwilling to make myself disagreeable to my fellow-citizens by too frequently soliciting their contributions, I absolutely refused. He then desired I would furnish him with a list of the names of persons I knew by experience to be generous and public-spirited. I thought it would be unbecoming in me, after their kind compliance with my solicitations, to mark them out to be worried by other beggars, and therefore refused also to give such a list. He then desired I would at least give him my advice. "That

I will readily do," said I; "and, in the first place, I advise you to apply to all those who you know will give some thing; next, to those whom you are uncertain whether they will give any thing or not, and show them the list of those who have given; and, lastly, do not neglect those who you are sure will give nothing, for in some of them you may be mistaken." He laughed and thanked me, and said he would take my advice. He did so, for he asked of *everybody*, and he obtained a much larger sum than he expected, with which he erected the capacious and very elegant meeting-house that stands in Arch-street.

Our city, though laid out with a beautiful regularity, the streets large, straight, and crossing each other at right angles, had the disgrace of suffering those streets to remain long unpaved, and in wet weather the wheels of heavy carriages plowed them into a quagmire, so that it was difficult to cross them; and in dry weather the dust was offensive. I had lived near what was called the Jersey Market, and saw with pain the inhabitants wading in mud while purchasing their provisions. A strip of ground down the middle of that market was at length paved with brick, so that, being once in the market, they had firm footing, but were often over shoes in dirt to get there. By talking and writing on the subject, I was at length instrumental in getting the street paved with stone between the market and the bricked foot-pavement, that was on each side next the houses. This, for some time, gave an easy access to the market dry-shod; but, the rest of the street not being paved, whenever a carriage came out of the mud upon this pavement, it shook off and left its dirt upon it, and it was soon covered with mire, which was not removed, the city as yet having no scavengers.

After some inquiry, I found a poor, industrious man, who

was willing to undertake keeping the pavement clean, by sweeping it twice a week, carrying off the dirt from before the neighbors' doors, for the sum of sixpence per month, to be paid by each house. I then wrote and printed a paper setting forth the advantages to the neighborhood that might be obtained by this small expense; the greater ease in keeping our houses clean, so much dirt not being brought in by people's feet; the benefit to the shops by more custom, etc., etc., as buyers could more easily get at them; and by not having, in windy weather, the dust blown in upon their goods, etc., etc. I sent one of these papers to each house, and in a day or two went round to see who would subscribe an agreement to pay these six-pences; it was unanimously signed, and for a time well executed. All the inhabitants of the city were delighted with the cleanliness of the pavement that surrounded the market, it being a convenience to all, and this raised a general desire to have all the streets paved, and made the people more willing to submit to a tax for that purpose.

After some time I drew a bill for paving the city, and brought it into the Assembly. It was just before I went to England, in 1757, and did not pass till I was gone, and then with an alteration in the mode of assessment, which I thought not for the better, but with an additional provision for lighting as well as paving the streets, which was a great improvement. It was by a private person, the late Mr. John Clifton, his giving a sample of the utility of lamps, by placing one at his door, that the people were first impressed with the idea of enlightening all the city. The honor of this public benefit has also been ascribed to me, but it belongs truly to that gentleman. I did but follow his example, and have only some merit to claim respecting the form of our lamps, as differing from the globe lamps we were at first supplied with from London.

Those we found inconvenient in these respects: they admitted no air below; the smoke, therefore, did not readily go out above, but circulated in the globe, lodged on its inside, and soon obstructed the light they were intended to afford; giving, besides, the daily trouble of wiping them clean; and an accidental stroke on one of them would demolish it, and render it totally useless. I therefore suggested the composing them of four flat panes, with a long funnel above to draw up the smoke, and crevices admitting air below, to facilitate the ascent of the smoke; by this means they were kept clean, and did not grow dark in a few hours, as the London lamps do, but continued bright until morning, and an accidental stroke would generally break but a single pane, easily repaired.

I have sometimes wondered that the Londoners did not, from the effect holes in the bottom of the globe lamps used at Vauxhall have in keeping them clean, learn to have such holes in their street lamps. But, these holes being made for another purpose, viz., to communicate flame more suddenly to the wick by a little flax hanging down through them, the other use, of letting in air, seems not to have been thought of; and therefore, after the lamps have been lit a few hours, the streets of London are very poorly illuminated.

[These, however, were not all the improvements effected at that time. Watson, in his "Annals of Philadelphia," says, that the "yellow willow tree" now so common throughout the country, was first introduced into America by Franklin. He saw a wicker basket made of willow, in which some foreign article had been imported, sprouting in a ditch, and directed some of the twigs to be planted. They took root, and from these shoots are supposed to have sprung all the yellow willows which have grown on this side of the Atlantic.

Chaptal, in his "Agricultural Chemistry," ascribes to Franklin, also, the introduction of the agricultural use of plaster of Paris into the United States. As this celebrated philosopher, says he, wished that the effects of this fertilizer should strike the gaze of all cultivators, he wrote in great letters, formed by the use of the ground plaster, in a field of clover lying upon the great road, "*This has been plastered.*" The prodigious vegetation, which was developed in the plastered portion, led him to adopt this method. Volumes upon the excellency of plaster would not have produced so speedy a revolution as these letters in living green accomplished.]

The mention of these improvements puts me in mind of one I proposed, when in London, to Dr. Fothergill, who was among the best men I have known, and a great promoter of useful projects. I had observed that the streets, when dry, were never swept, and the light dust carried away; but it was suffered to accumulate till wet weather reduced it to mud, and then, after lying some days so deep on the pavement that there was no crossing but in paths kept clean by poor people with brooms, it was with great labor raked together and thrown up into carts open above, the sides of which suffered some of the slush at every jolt on the pavement to shake out and fall, sometimes to the annoyance of foot-passengers. The reason given for not sweeping the dusty streets was, that the dust would fly into the windows of shops and houses.

An accidental occurrence had instructed me how much sweeping might be done in a little time. I found at my door in Craven-street, one morning, a poor woman sweeping my pavements with a birch broom; she appeared very pale and feeble, as just come out of a fit of sickness. I asked who employed her to sweep there; she said, "Nobody; but I am

very poor and in distress, and I sweeps before gentlefolkses doors, and hopes they will give me some thing." I bid her sweep the whole street clean, and I would give her a shilling; this was at nine o'clock; at 12 she came for the shilling. From the slowness I saw at first in her working, I could scarce believe that the work was done so soon, and sent my servant to examine it, who reported that the whole street had been swept perfectly clean, and all the dust placed in the gutter, which was in the middle; and the next rain washed it quite away, so that the pavement and even the kennel were perfectly clean.

I then judged that, if that feeble woman could sweep such a street in three hours, a strong, active man might have done it in half the time. And here let me remark the convenience of having but one gutter in such a narrow street, running down its middle, instead of two, one on each side, near the footway; for where all the rain that falls on a street runs from the sides and meets in the middle, it forms there a current strong enough to wash away all the mud it meets with; but when divided into two channels, it is often too weak to cleanse either, and only makes the mud it finds more fluid, so that the wheels of carriages and feet of horses throw and dash it upon the foot-pavement, which is thereby rendered foul and slippery, and sometimes splash it upon those who are walking. My proposal, communicated to the good doctor, was as follows:

"For the more effectual cleaning and keeping clean the streets of London and Westminster, it is proposed that the several watchmen be contracted with to have the dust swept up in dry seasons, and the mud raked up at other times, each in the several streets and lanes of his round; that they be furnished with brooms and other proper instruments for

these purposes, to be kept at their respective stands, ready to furnish the poor people they may employ in the service.

"That in the dry summer months the dust be all swept up into heaps at proper distances, before the shops and windows of houses are usually opened, when the scavengers, with close-covered carts, shall also carry it all away.

"That the mud, when raked up, be not left in heaps to be spread abroad again by the wheels of carriages and trampling of horses, but that the scavengers be provided with bodies of carts, not placed high upon wheels, but low upon sliders, with lattice bottoms, which, being covered with straw, will retain the mud thrown into them, and permit the water to drain from it, whereby it will become much lighter, water making the greatest part of its weight; these bodies of carts to be placed at convenient distances, and the mud brought to them in wheelbarrows; they remaining where placed till the mud is drained, and then horses brought to draw them away."

I have since had doubts of the practicability of the latter part of this proposal, on account of the narrowness of some streets, and the difficulty of placing the draining-sleds so as not to encumber too much the passage; but I am still of opinion that the former, requiring the dust to be swept up and carried away before the shops are open, is very practicable in the summer, when the days are long; for, in walking through the Strand and Fleet-street one morning at seven o'clock, I observed there was not one shop open, though it had been daylight and the sun up above three hours; the inhabitants of London choosing voluntarily to live much by candlelight, and sleep by sunshine, and yet often complain, a little absurdly, of the duty on candles, and the high price of tallow.

Some may think these trifling matters not worth minding or relating; but when they consider that though dust blown

into the eyes of a single person, or into a single shop on a windy day, is but of small importance, yet the great number of the instances in a populous city, and its frequent repetitions give it weight and consequence, perhaps they will not censure very severely those who bestow some attention to affairs of this seemingly low nature. Human felicity is produced not so much by great pieces of good fortune that seldom happen, as by little advantages that occur every day. Thus, if you teach a poor young man to shave himself, and keep his razor in order, you may contribute more to the happiness of his life than in giving him a thousand guineas. The money may be soon spent, the regret only remaining of having foolishly consumed it; but, in the other case, he escapes the frequent vexation of waiting for barbers, and of their sometimes dirty fingers, offensive breaths, and dull razors; he shaves when most convenient to him, and enjoys daily the pleasure of its being done with a good instrument. With these sentiments I have hazarded the few preceding pages, hoping they may afford hints which some time or other may be useful to a city I love, having lived many years in it very happily, and perhaps to some of our towns in America.

## FRANKLIN APPOINTED POSTMASTER-GENERAL. HE DRAWS UP A PLAN FOR A UNION OF THE COLONIES

Having been for some time employed by the postmaster-general of America as his comptroller in regulating several offices, and bringing the officers to account, I was, upon his death in 1753, appointed, jointly with Mr. William Hunter, to succeed him, by a commission from the postmaster-general in England. The American office never had hitherto paid any thing to that of Britain. We were to have six hundred

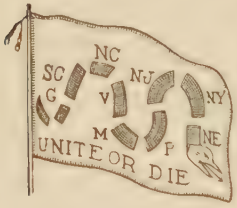
pounds a year between us, if we could make that sum out of the profits of the office. To do this, a variety of improvements were necessary; some of these were inevitably at first expensive, so that in the first four years the office became above nine hundred pounds in debt to us. But it soon after began to repay us; and before I was displaced by a freak of the ministers, of which I shall speak hereafter, we had brought it to yield *three times* as much clear revenue to the crown as the post-office of Ireland. Since that imprudent transaction, they have received from it—not one farthing!

The business of the post-office occasioned my taking a journey this year to New England, where the College of Cambridge, of their own motion, presented me with the degree of Master of Arts. Yale College, in Connecticut, had before made me a similar compliment. Thus, without studying in any college, I came to partake of their honors. They were conferred in consideration of my improvements and discoveries in the electric branch of natural philosophy.

In 1754, war with France being again apprehended, a congress of commissioners from the different colonies was, by an order of the Lords of Trade, to be assembled at Albany, there to confer with the chiefs of the Six Nations concerning the means of defending both their country and ours. Governor Hamilton, having received this order, acquainted the House with it, requesting they would furnish proper presents for the Indians, to be given on this occasion; and naming the speaker (Mr. Norris) and myself to join Mr. Thomas Penn and Mr. Secretary Peters as commissioners to act for Pennsylvania. The House approved the nomination, and provided the goods for the presents, though they did not much like treating out of the provinces; and we met the other commissioners at Albany about the middle of June.

[Just before starting for Albany, Franklin published an article in his *Gazette*, urging the imperative necessity of a union of the colonies. The article had for a heading the accompanying woodcut representing a snake cut into pieces, each piece being labelled to represent one or more of the colonies, *e.g.* G. (Georgia), S.C. (South Carolina), etc.,—and, with the appropriate motto UNITE OR DIE, the design was afterwards used for a flag.]

In our way thither, I projected and drew a plan for the union of all the colonies under one government, so far as might be necessary for defense, and other important general purposes. As we passed through New York, I had there shown my project to Mr. James Alexander and Mr. Kennedy, two gentlemen of great knowledge in public affairs, and being fortified by their approbation, I ventured to lay it before the Congress. It then appeared that several of the commissioners had formed plans of the same kind. A previous question was first taken, whether a union should be established, which passed in the affirmative unanimously. A committee was then appointed, one member from each colony to consider the several plans and report. Mine happened to be preferred, and, with a few amendments, was accordingly reported.




By this plan the general government was to be administered by a president-general, appointed and supported by the crown, and a grand council was to be chosen by the representatives of the people of the several colonies, met in their respective assemblies. The debates upon it in Congress went on daily, hand in hand with the Indian business. Many objections and difficulties were started, but at length they were all

overcome, and the plan was unanimously agreed to, and copies ordered to be transmitted to the Board of Trade, and to the assemblies of the several provinces. Its fate was singular: the assemblies did not adopt it, as they all thought there was too much *prerogative* in it, and in England it was judged to have too much of the *democratic*. The Board of Trade therefore did not approve of it, nor recommend it for the approbation of his majesty; but another scheme was formed, supposed to answer the same purpose better, whereby the governors of the provinces, with some members of their respective councils, were to meet and order the raising of troops, building of forts, etc., and to draw on the treasury of Great Britain for the expense, which was afterwards to be refunded by an act of Parliament laying a tax on America. My plan, with my reasons in support of it, is to be found among my political papers that are printed.

Being the winter following in Boston, I had much conversation with Governor Shirley upon both the plans. Part of what passed between us on the occasion may also be seen among those papers. The different and contrary reasons of dislike to my plan make me suspect that it was really the true medium; and I am still of opinion it would have been happy for both sides the water if it had been adopted. The colonies, so united, would have been sufficiently strong to have defended themselves; there would then have been no need of troops from England; of course, the subsequent pretence for taxing America, and the bloody contest it occasioned, would have been avoided. But such mistakes are not new: history is full of the errors of states and princes.

> Look round the habitable world, how few
> Know their own good, or, knowing it, pursue!

Those who govern, having much business on their hands, do not generally like to take the trouble of considering and carrying into execution new projects. The best public measures are therefore seldom *adopted from previous wisdom, but forced by the occasion.*

The governor of Pennsylvania, in sending it down to the Assembly, expressed his approbation of the plan, "as appearing to him to be drawn up with great clearness and strength of judgment, and therefore recommended it as well worthy of their closest and most serious attention." The House, however, by the management of a certain member, took it up when I happened to be absent, which I thought not very fair, and reprobated it without paying any attention to it at all, to my no small mortification.

In my journey to Boston this year, I met at New York with our new governor, Mr. Morris, just arrived there from England, with whom I had been before intimately acquainted. He brought a commission to supersede Mr. Hamilton, who, tired with the disputes his proprietary instructions subjected him to, had resigned. Mr. Morris asked me if I thought he must expect as uncomfortable an administration. I said, "No; you may, on the contrary, have a very comfortable one, if you will only take care not to enter into any dispute with the Assembly." "My dear friend," says he, pleasantly, "how can you advise my avoiding disputes? You know I love disputing; it is one of my greatest pleasures; however, to show the regard I have for your counsel, I promise you I will, if possible, avoid them." He had some reason for loving to dispute, being eloquent, an acute sophister, and, therefore, generally successful in argumentative conversation. He had been brought up to it from a boy, his father, as I have heard, accustoming his children to dispute

with one another for his diversion, while sitting at table after dinner; but I think the practice was not wise; for, in the course of my observation, these disputing, contradicting, and confuting people are generally unfortunate in their affairs. They get victory sometimes, but they never get good will, which would be of more use to them. We parted, he going to Philadelphia, and I to Boston.

In returning, I met at New York with the votes of the Assembly, by which it appeared that, notwithstanding his promise to me, he and the House were already in high contention; and it was a continual battle between them as long as he retained the government. I had my share of it; for, as soon as I got to my seat in the Assembly, I was put on every committee for answering his speeches and messages, and by the committees always desired to make the drafts. Our answers, as well as his messages, were often tart, and sometimes violently abusive; and, as he knew I wrote for the Assembly, one might have imagined that, when we met, we could hardly avoid cutting throats; but he was so good-natured a man that no personal difference between him and me was occasioned by the contest, and we often dined together.

One afternoon, in the height of this public quarrel, we met in the street. "Franklin," says he, "you must go home with me and spend the evening; I am to have some company that you will like;" and, taking me by the arm, he led me to his house. In gay conversation over our wine, after supper, he told us, jokingly, that he much admired the idea of Sancho Panza, who, when it was proposed to give him a government, requested it might be a government of *blacks*, as then, if he could not agree with his people, he might sell them. One of his friends, who sat next to me, says, "Franklin, why do you

continue to side with these confounded Quakers? Had not you better sell them? The proprietor would give you a good price." "The governor," says I, "has not yet *blacked* them enough." He, indeed, had labored hard to blacken the Assembly in all his messages, but they wiped off his coloring as fast as he laid it on, and placed it, in return, thick upon his own face; so that, finding he was likely to be *negrofied* himself, he, as well as Mr. Hamilton, grew tired of the contest, and quitted the government.

These public quarrels were all at bottom owing to the proprietaries, our hereditary governors, who, when any expense was to be incurred for the defense of their province, with incredible meanness instructed their deputies to pass no act for levying the necessary taxes, unless their vast estates were in the same act expressly excused; and they had even taken bonds of these deputies to observe such instructions. The Assemblies for three years held out against this injustice, though constrained to bend at last. At length Captain Denny, who was Governor Morris's successor, ventured to disobey those instructions: how that was brought about I shall show hereafter.

But I am got forward too fast with my story: there are still some transactions to be mentioned that happened during the administration of Governor Morris.

War being in a manner commenced with France, the government of Massachusetts Bay projected an attack upon Crown Point [1755], and sent Mr. Quincy to Pennsylvania, and Mr. Pownall, afterward Governor Pownall, to New York, to solicit assistance. As I was in the Assembly, knew its temper, and was Mr. Quincy's countryman, he applied to me for my influence and assistance. I dictated his address to them, which was well received. They voted an aid of ten

thousand pounds, to be laid out in provisions. But the governor refusing his assent to their bill (which included this with other sums granted for the use of the crown), unless a clause were inserted exempting the proprietary estate from bearing any part of the tax that would be necessary, the Assembly, though very desirous of making their grant to New England effectual, were at a loss how to accomplish it. Mr. Quincy labored hard with the governor to obtain his assent, but he was obstinate.

I then suggested a method of doing business without the governor, by orders on the trustees of the Loan Office, which, by law, the Assembly had the right of drawing. There was, indeed, little or no money at that time in the office, and therefore I proposed that the orders should be payable in a year, and to bear an interest of five per cent. With these orders I supposed the provisions might easily be purchased. The Assembly, with very little hesitation, adopted the proposal. The orders were immediately printed, and I was one of the committee directed to sign and dispose of them. The fund for paying them was the interest of all the paper currency then extant in the province upon loan, together with the revenue arising from the excise, which being known to be more than sufficient, they obtained instant credit, and were not only received in payment for the provisions, but many moneyed people, who had cash lying by them, invested it in those orders, which they found advantageous, as they bore interest while upon hand, and might on any occasion be used as money; so that they were eagerly all bought up, and in a few weeks none of them were to be seen. Thus this important affair was by my means completed. Mr. Quincy returned thanks to the Assembly in a handsome memorial, went home highly pleased with the success of his embassy,

and ever after bore for me the most cordial and affectionate friendship.

The British government, not choosing to permit the union of the colonies as proposed at Albany, and to trust that union with their defense, lest they should thereby grow too military, and feel their own strength, suspicions and jealousies at this time being entertained of them, sent over General Braddock with two regiments of regular English troops for that purpose. He landed at Alexandria, in Virginia, and thence marched to Frederictown, in Maryland, where he halted for carriages. Our Assembly apprehending, from some information, that he had conceived violent prejudices against them, as averse to the service, wished me to wait upon him, not as from them, but as postmaster-general, under the guise of proposing to settle with him the mode of conducting with most celerity and certainty the dispatches between him and the governors of the several provinces, with whom he must necessarily have continual correspondence, and of which they proposed to pay the expense. My son accompanied me on this journey.

We found the general at Frederictown, waiting impatiently for the return of those he had sent through the back parts of Maryland and Virginia to collect waggons. I stayed with him several days, dined with him daily, and had full opportunity of removing all his prejudices, by the information of what the Assembly had before his arrival actually done, and were still willing to do, to facilitate his operations. When I was about to depart, the returns of waggons to be obtained were brought in, by which it appeared that they amounted only to twenty-five, and not all of those were in serviceable condition. The general and all the officers were surprised, declared the expedition was then at an end, being impossible,

and exclaimed against the ministers for ignorantly landing them in a country destitute of the means of conveying their stores, baggage, etc., not less than one hundred and fifty waggons being necessary.

I happened to say I thought it was pity they had not been landed rather in Pennsylvania, as in that country almost every farmer had his waggon. The general eagerly laid hold of my words, and said, "Then you, sir, who are a man of interest there, can probably procure them for us; and I beg you will undertake it." I asked what terms were to be offered the owners of the waggons; and I was desired to put on paper the terms that appeared to me necessary. This I did, and they were agreed to, and a commission and instructions accordingly prepared immediately. What those terms were will appear in the advertisement I published as soon as I arrived at Lancaster, which, being, from the great and sudden effect it produced, a piece of some curiosity, I shall insert it at length, as follows:

"ADVERTISEMENT.

"LANCASTER, *April* 26, 1755.

"Whereas, one hundred and fifty waggons, with four horses to each waggon, and fifteen hundred saddle or pack horses, are wanted for the service of his majesty's forces now about to rendezvous at Will's Creek, and his excellency General Braddock having been pleased to empower me to contract for the hire of the same, I hereby give notice that I shall attend for that purpose at Lancaster from this day to next Wednesday evening, and at York from next Thursday morning till Friday evening, where I shall be ready to agree for waggons and teams, or single horses, on the following

terms, viz.: 1. That there shall be paid for each waggon, with four good horses and a driver, fifteen shillings per diem; and for each able horse with a pack-saddle, or other saddle and furniture two shillings per diem; and for each able horse without a saddle, eighteen pence per diem. 2. That the pay commence from the time of their joining the forces at Will's Creek, which must be on or before the 20th of May ensuing, and that a reasonable allowance be paid over and above for the time necessary for their traveling to Will's Creek and home again after their discharge. 3. Each waggon and team, and every saddle or pack horse, is to be valued by indifferent persons chosen between me and the owner; and in case of the loss of any waggon, team, or other horse in the service, the price according to such valuation is to be allowed and paid. 4. Seven days' pay is to be advanced and paid in hand by me to the owner of each waggon and team, or horse, at the time of contracting, if required, and the remainder to be paid by General Braddock, or by the paymaster of the army at the time of their discharge, or from time to time, as it shall be demanded. 5. No drivers of waggons, or persons taking care of the hired horses, are on any account to be called upon to do the duty of soldiers, or be otherwise employed than in conducting or taking care of their carriages or horses. 6. All oats, Indian corn, or other forage that waggons or horses bring to the camp, more than is necessary for the subsistence of the horses, is to be taken for the use of the army, and a reasonable price paid for the same.

"Note.— My son, William Franklin, is empowered to enter into like contracts with any person in Cumberland county.

B. Franklin."

"*To the inhabitants of the Counties of Lancaster, York, and Cumberland.*

"Friends and Countrymen,

"Being occasionally at the camp at Frederic a few days since, I found the general and officers extremely exasperated on account of their not being supplied with horses and carriages, which had been expected from this province, as most able to furnish them; but, through the dissensions, between our governor and Assembly, money had not been provided, nor any steps taken for that purpose.

"It was proposed to send an armed force immediately into these counties, to seize as many of the best carriages and horses as should be wanted, and compel as many persons into the service as would be necessary to drive and take care of them.

"I apprehended that the progress of British soldiers through these counties on such an occasion, especially considering the temper they are in, and their resentment against us, would be attended with many and great inconveniences to the inhabitants, and therefore more willingly took the trouble of trying first what might be done by fair and equitable means. The people of these back counties have lately complained to the Assembly that a sufficient currency was wanting; you have an opportunity of receiving and dividing among you a very considerable sum; for if the service of this expedition should continue, as it is more than probable it will, for one hundred and twenty days, the hire of these waggons and horses will amount to upward of thirty thousand pounds, which will be paid you in silver and gold of the king's money.

"The service will be light and easy, for the army will scarce march above twelve miles per day, and the waggons and baggage-horses, as they carry those things that are

absolutely necessary to the welfare of the army, must march with the army and no faster; and are, for the army's sake, always placed where they can be most secure, whether in a march or in a camp.

"If you are really, as I believe you are, good and loyal subjects to his majesty, you may now do a most acceptable service and make it easy to yourselves: for three or four of such as can not separately spare from the business of their plantations a waggon and four horses and a driver, may do it together, one furnishing the waggon, another one or two horses, and another the driver, and divide the pay proportionably between you; but if you do not this service to your king and country voluntarily, when such good pay and reasonable terms are offered to you, your loyalty will be strongly suspected. The king's business must be done: so many brave troops, come so far for your defense, must not stand idle through your backwardness to do what may be reasonably expected from you: waggons and horses must be had; violent measures will probably be used, and you will be left to seek for a recompense where you can find it, and your case, perhaps, be little pitied or regarded.

"I have no particular interest in this affair, as, except the satisfaction of endeavoring to do good, I shall have only my labor for my pains. If this method of obtaining the waggons and horses is not likely to succeed, I am obliged to send word to the general in fourteen days; and I suppose Sir John St. Clair, the hussar, with a body of soldiers, will immediately enter the province for the purpose, which I shall be sorry to hear, because I am very sincerely and truly your friend and well-wisher,

"B. Franklin."

WAGGONS OF GENERAL BRADDOCK ON THE WAY TO FORT DUQUESNE

I received of the general about eight hundred pounds, to be disbursed in advance-money to the waggon owners, etc.; but that sum being insufficient, I advanced upward of two hundred pounds more, and in two weeks the one hundred and fifty waggons, with two hundred and fifty-nine carrying horses, were on their march for the camp. The advertisement promised payment according to the valuation, in case any waggon or horse should be lost. The owners, however, alleging they did not know General Braddock, or what dependence might be had on his promise, insisted on my bond for the performance, which I accordingly gave them.

While I was at the camp, supping one evening with the officers of Colonel Dunbar's regiment, he represented to me his concern for the subalterns, who, he said, were generally not in affluence, and could ill afford, in this dear country, to lay in the stores that might be necessary in so long a march, through a wilderness, where nothing was to be purchased. I commiserated their case, and resolved to endeavor procuring them some relief. I said nothing, however, to him of my intention, but wrote the next morning to the committee of the Assembly, who had the disposition of some public money, warmly recommending the case of these officers to their consideration, and proposing that a present should be sent them of necessaries and refreshments. My son, who had some experience of a camp life, and of its wants, drew up a list for me, which I enclosed in my letter. The committee approved, and used such diligence that, conducted by my son, the stores arrived at the camp as soon as the waggons. They consisted of twenty parcels, each containing

6 lbs. loaf sugar.
6 lbs. good Muscovado do. [brown sugar].
1 lb. good green tea.
1 lb. good bohea do. [bo-hee', black tea].
6 lbs. good ground coffee.
6 lbs. chocolate.
½ cwt. best white biscuit [*i.e.*, hard biscuit, "crackers"].
½ lb. pepper.
1 quart best white wine vinegar.
1 Gloucester cheese.
1 kegg containing 20 lbs. good butter.
2 doz. old Madeira wine.
2 gallons Jamaica spirits.
1 bottle flour of mustard.
2 well-cured hams.
½ doz. dried tongues.
6 lbs. rice.
6 lbs. raisins.

These twenty parcels, well packed, were placed on as many horses, each parcel, with the horse, being intended as a present for one officer. They were very thankfully received, and the kindness acknowledged by letters to me from the colonels of both regiments, in the most grateful terms. The general, too, was highly satisfied with my conduct in procuring him the waggons, etc., and readily paid my account of disbursements, thanking me repeatedly, and requesting my further assistance in sending provisions after him. I undertook this also, and was busily employed in it till we heard of his defeat, advancing for the service of my own money, upwards of one thousand pounds sterling, of which I sent him an account. It came to his hands, luckily for me, a few days before the battle, and he returned me immediately an order on the paymaster for the round sum of one thousand pounds, leaving the remainder to the next account. I consider this payment as good luck, having never been able to obtain that remainder, of which more hereafter.

This general was, I think, a brave man, and might probably have made a figure as a good officer in some European war. But he had too much self-confidence, too high an opinion of the validity of regular troops, and too mean a one of

both Americans and Indians. George Croghan, our Indian interpreter, joined him on his march with one hundred of those people, who might have been of great use to his army as guides, scouts, etc., if he had treated them kindly; but he slighted and neglected them, and they gradually left him.

In conversation with him one day, he was giving me some account of his intended progress. "After taking Fort Duquesne," says he, "I am to proceed to Niagara; and, having taken that, to Frontenac, if the season will allow time; and I suppose it will, for Duquesne can hardly detain me above three or four days; and then I see nothing that can obstruct my march to Niagara." Having before revolved in my mind the long line his army must make in their march by a very narrow road, to be cut for them through the woods and bushes, and also what I had read of a former defeat of fifteen hundred French, who invaded the Iroquois country, I had conceived some doubts and some fears for the event of the campaign. But I ventured only to say, "To be sure, sir, if you arrive well before Duquesne, with these fine troops, so well provided with artillery, that place not yet completely fortified, and as we hear with no very strong garrison, can probably make but a short resistance. The only danger I apprehend of obstruction to your march is from ambuscades of Indians, who, by constant practice, are dexterous in laying and executing them; and the slender line, near four miles long, which your army must make, may expose it to be attacked by surprise in its flanks, and to be cut like a thread into several pieces, which, from their distance, can not come up in time to support each other."

He smiled at my ignorance, and replied, "These savages may, indeed, be a formidable enemy to your raw American militia, but upon the king's regular and disciplined troops,

sir, it is impossible they should make any impression." I was conscious of an impropriety in my disputing with a military man in matters of his profession, and said no more. The enemy, however, did not take the advantage of his army which I apprehended its long line of march exposed it to, but let it advance without interruption till within nine miles of the place; and then, when more in a body (for it had just passed a river, where the front had halted till all were come over), and in a more open part of the woods than any it had passed, attacked its advanced guard by a heavy fire from behind trees and bushes, which was the first intelligence the general had of an enemy's being near him. This guard being disordered, the general hurried the troops up to their assistance, which was done in great confusion, through waggons, baggage, and cattle; and presently the fire came upon their flank: the officers, being on horseback, were more easily distinguished, picked out as marks, and fell very fast; and the soldiers were crowded together in a huddle, having or hearing no orders, and standing to be shot at till two-thirds of them were killed; and then, being seized with a panic, the whole fled with precipitation.

The waggoners took each a horse out of his team and scampered; their example was immediately followed by others; so that all the waggons, provisions, artillery, and stores were left to the enemy. The general, being wounded, was brought off with difficulty; his secretary, Mr. Shirley, was killed by his side; and out of eighty-six officers, sixty-three were killed, or wounded, and seven hundred and fourteen men killed out of eleven hundred. These eleven hundred had been picked men from the whole army; the rest had been left behind with Colonel Dunbar, who was to follow with the heavier part of the stores, provisions, and baggage.

The flyers, not being pursued, arrived at Dunbar's camp, and the panic they brought with them instantly seized him and all his people; and though he had now above one thousand men, and the enemy who had beaten Braddock did not at most exceed four hundred Indians and French together, instead of proceeding, and endeavoring to recover some of the lost honor, he ordered all the stores, ammunition, etc., to be destroyed, that he might have more horses to assist his flight towards the settlements, and less lumber to remove. He was there met with requests from the governors of Virginia, Maryland, and Pennsylvania, that he would post his troops on the frontiers, so as to afford some protection to the inhabitants; but he continued his hasty march through all the country, not thinking himself safe till he arrived at Philadelphia, where the inhabitants could protect him. This whole transaction gave us Americans the first suspicion that our exalted ideas of the prowess of British regulars had not been well founded.

In their first march, too, from their landing till they got beyond the settlements, they had plundered and stripped the inhabitants, totally ruining some poor families, besides insulting, abusing, and confining the people if they remonstrated. This was enough to put us out of conceit of such defenders, if we had really wanted any. How different was the conduct of our French friends in 1781, who, during a march through the most inhabited part of our country from Rhode Island to Virginia, near seven hundred miles, occasioned not the smallest complaint for the loss of a pig, a chicken, or even an apple.

Captain Orme, who was one of the general's aids-de-camp, and, being grievously wounded, was brought off with him, and continued with him to his death, which happened in a

few days, told me that he was totally silent all the first day, and at night only said, "Who would have thought it?" That he was silent again the following day, saying only at last, "We shall better know how to deal with them another time;" and died in a few minutes after.

The secretary's papers, with all the general's orders, instructions, and correspondence, falling into the enemy's hands, they selected and translated into French a number of the articles, which they printed, to prove the hostile intentions of the British court before the declaration of war. Among these I saw some letters of the general to the ministry, speaking highly of the great service I had rendered the army, and recommending me to their notice. David Hume, too, who was some years after secretary to Lord Hertford, when minister in France, and afterward to General Conway, when secretary of state, told me he had seen among the papers in that office, letters from Braddock highly recommending me. But, the expedition having been unfortunate, my service, it seems, was not thought of much value, for those recommendations were never of any use to me.

As to rewards from himself, I asked only one, which was, that he would give orders to his officers not to enlist any more of our bought servants, and that he would discharge such as had been already enlisted. This he readily granted, and several were accordingly returned to their masters, on my application. Dunbar, when the command devolved on him, was not so generous. He being at Philadelphia, on his retreat, or rather flight, I applied to him for the discharge of the servants of three poor farmers of Lancaster county that he had enlisted, reminding him of the late general's orders on that head. He promised me

that, if the masters would come to him at Trenton, where he should be in a few days on his march to New York, he would there deliver their men to them. They accordingly were at the expense and trouble of going to Trenton, and there he refused to perform his promise, to their great loss and disappointment.

As soon as the loss of the waggons and horses was generally known, all the owners came upon me for the valuation which I had given bond to pay. Their demands gave me a great deal of trouble, my acquainting them that the money was ready in the paymaster's hands, but that orders for paying it must first be obtained from General Shirley, and my assuring them that I had applied to that general by letter; but he, being at a distance, an answer could not soon be received, and they must have patience, all this was not sufficient to satisfy, and some began to sue me. General Shirley at length relieved me from this terrible situation by appointing commissioners to examine the claims and ordering payment. They amounted to near twenty thousand pounds, which to pay would have ruined me.

Before we had the news of this defeat, the two Doctors Bond came to me with a subscription paper for raising money to defray the expense of a grand firework, which it was intended to exhibit at a rejoicing on receipt of the news of our taking Fort Duquesne. I looked grave, and said it would, I thought, be time enough to prepare for the rejoicing when we knew we should have occasion to rejoice. They seemed surprised that I did not immediately comply with their proposal. "Why," says one of them, "you surely don't suppose that the fort will not be taken?" "I don't know that it will not be taken, but I know that the events of war are subject to great uncertainty." I gave them the reasons of

my doubting; the subscription was dropped, and the projectors thereby missed the mortification they would have undergone if the firework had been prepared. Dr. Bond, on some other occasion afterward, said he did not like Franklin's forebodings.

Governor Morris, who had continually worried the Assembly with message after message before the defeat of Braddock, to beat them into the making of acts to raise money for the defense of the province, without taxing, among others, the proprietary estates, and had rejected all their bills for not having such an exempting clause, now redoubled his attacks with more hope of success, the danger and necessity being greater. The Assembly, however, continued firm, believing they had justice on their side, and that it would be giving up an essential right if they suffered the governor to amend their money-bills. In one of the last, indeed, which was for granting fifty thousand pounds, his proposed amendment was, only of a single word. The bill expressed "that all estates, real and personal, were to be taxed, those of the proprietaries *not* excepted." His amendment was, for *not* read *only*: a small, but very material alteration. However, when the news of this disaster reached England, our friends there, whom we had taken care to furnish with all the Assembly's answers to the governor's messages, raised a clamor against the proprietaries for their meanness and injustice in giving their governor such instructions; some going so far as to say that, by obstructing the defense of their province, they forfeited their right to it. They were intimidated by this, and sent orders to their receiver-general to add five thousand pounds of their money to whatever sum might be given by the Assembly for such purpose.

This, being notified to the House, was accepted in lieu of their share of a general tax, and a new bill was formed, with an exempting clause, which passed accordingly. By this act I was appointed one of the commissioners for disposing of the money, sixty thousand pounds.

## FRANKLIN ESTABLISHES THE FIRST PERMANENT MILITIA COMPANY IN THE COLONIES

I had been active in modeling the bill and procuring its passage, and had, at the same time, drawn a bill for establishing and disciplining a voluntary militia, which I carried through the House without much difficulty, as care was taken in it to leave the Quakers at their liberty. To promote the association necessary to form the militia, I wrote a dialogue, stating and answering all the objections I could think of to such a militia, which was printed, and had, as I thought, great effect.

While the several companies in the city and country were forming, and learning their exercise, the governor prevailed with me to take charge of our North-western frontier, which was infested by the enemy, and provide for the defense of the inhabitants by raising troops and building a line of forts. I undertook this military business, though I did not conceive myself well qualified for it. He gave me a commission with full powers, and a parcel of blank commissions for officers, to be given to whom I thought fit. I had but little difficulty in raising men, having soon five hundred and sixty under my command. My son, who had in the preceding war been an officer in the army raised against Canada, was my aid-de-camp, and of great use to me. The Indians had burned Gnadenhut, a village settled by the Moravians, and mas-

sacred the inhabitants; but the place was thought a good situation for one of the forts.

In order to march thither, I assembled the companies at Bethlehem, the chief establishment of those people. I was surprised to find it in so good a posture of defense: the destruction of Gnadenhut had made them apprehend danger. The principal buildings were defended by a stockade; they had purchased a quantity of arms and ammunition from New York, and had even placed quantities of small paving stones between the windows of their high stone houses, for their women to throw down upon the heads of any Indians that should attempt to force into them. The armed brethren, too, kept watch, and relieved as methodically as in any garrison town. In conversation with the bishop, Spangenberg, I mentioned this, my surprise; for, knowing they had obtained an act of Parliament exempting them from military duties in the colonies, I had supposed they were conscientiously scrupulous against bearing arms. He answered me that it was not one of their established principles, but that, at the time of their obtaining that act, it was thought to be a principle with many of their people. On this occasion, however, they, to their surprise, found it adopted by but a few. It seems they were either deceived in themselves, or deceived the Parliament; but common sense, aided by present danger, will sometimes be too strong for whimsical opinions.

It was the beginning of January when we set out upon this business of building forts. I sent one detachment toward the Minisink, with instructions to erect one for the security of that upper part of the country, and another to the lower part with similar instructions; and I concluded to go myself with the rest of my force to Gnadenhut, where a fort was

thought more immediately necessary. The Moravians procured me five waggons for our tools, stores, baggage, etc.

Just before we left Bethlehem, eleven farmers, who had been driven from their plantations by the Indians, came to me requesting a supply of firearms, that they might go back and fetch off their cattle. I gave them each a gun with suitable ammunition. We had not marched many miles before it began to rain, and it continued raining all day; there were no habitations on the road to shelter us, till we arrived near night at the house of a German, where, and in his barn, we were all huddled together, as wet as water could make us. It was well we were not attacked on our march, for our arms were of the most ordinary sort, and our men could not keep their gun-locks dry. The Indians are dextrous in contrivances for that purpose, which we had not. They met that day the eleven poor farmers above mentioned, and killed ten of them. The one who escaped informed us that his and his companions' guns would not go off, the priming being wet with the rain.

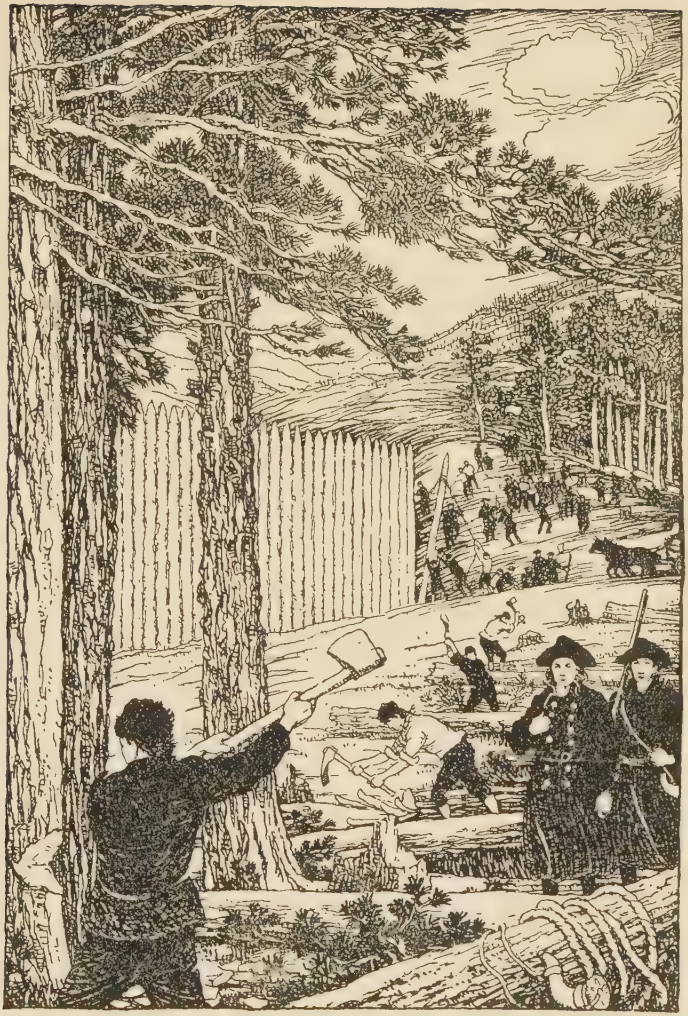
The next day being fair, we continued our march, and arrived at the desolated Gnadenhut. There was a sawmill near, round which were left several piles of boards, with which we soon hutted ourselves; an operation the more necessary at that inclement season, as we had no tents. Our first work was to bury more effectually the dead we found there, who had been half interred by the country people.

The next morning our fort was planned and marked out, the circumference measuring four hundred and fifty-five feet, which would require as many palisades to be made of trees, one with another, of a foot diameter each. Our axes, of which we had seventy, were immediately set to work to cut down trees, and, our men being dextrous in the use of them,

great dispatch was made. Seeing the trees fall so fast, I had the curiosity to look at my watch when two men began to cut at a pine; in six minutes they had it upon the ground, and I found it of fourteen inches diameter. Each pine made three palisades of eighteen feet long, pointed at one end. While these were preparing, our other men dug a trench all round, of three feet deep, in which the palisades were to be planted; and, our waggons, the bodies being taken off, and the fore and hind wheels separated by taking out the pin which united the two parts of the perch, we had ten carriages with two horses each, to bring the palisades from the woods to the spot. When they were set up, our carpenters built a stage of boards all round within, about six feet high, for the men to stand on when to fire through the loopholes. We had one swivel gun, which we mounted on one of the angles, and fired it as soon as fixed, to let the Indians know, if any were within hearing, that we had such pieces; and thus our fort, if such a magnificent name may be given to so miserable a stockade, was finished in a week, though it rained so hard every other day that the men could not work.

This gave me occasion to observe, that, when men are employed, they are best contented; for on the days they worked they were good-natured and cheerful, and, with the consciousness of having done a good day's work, they spent the evening jollily; but on our idle days they were mutinous and quarrelsome, finding fault with their pork, the bread, etc., and in continual ill-humor, which put me in mind of a sea-captain, whose rule it was to keep his men constantly at work; and, when his mate once told him that they had done every thing, and there was nothing further to employ them about, "*Oh*," *says he*, "*make them scour the anchor*."

This kind of fort, however contemptible, is a sufficient



BUILDING A FORT AT GNADENHUT

defense against Indians, who have no cannon. Finding ourselves now posted securely, and having a place to retreat to on occasion, we ventured out in parties to scour the adjacent country. We met with no Indians, but we found the places on the neighboring hills, where they had lain to watch our proceedings. There was an art in their contrivance of those places that seems worth mention. It being winter, a fire was necessary for them; but a common fire on the surface of the ground would by its light have discovered their position at a distance. They had therefore dug holes in the ground about three feet diameter, and somewhat deeper; we saw where they had with their hatchets cut off the charcoal from the sides of burnt logs lying in the woods. With these coals they had made small fires in the bottom of the holes, and we observed among the weeds and grass the print of their bodies, made by their lying all round, with their legs hanging down in the holes to keep their feet warm, which, with them, is an essential point. This kind of fire, so managed, could not discover them, either by its light, flame, sparks, or even smoke: it appeared that their number was not great, and it seems they saw we were too many to be attacked by them with prospect of advantage.

We had for our chaplain a zealous Presbyterian minister, Mr. Beatty, who complained to me that the men did not generally attend his prayers and exhortations. When they enlisted, they were promised, besides pay and provisions, a gill of rum a day, which was punctually served out to them, half in the morning, and the other half in the evening; and I observed they were as punctual in attending to receive it; upon which I said to Mr. Beatty, "It is, perhaps, below the dignity of your profession to act as steward of the rum, but if you were to deal it out, and only just after prayers, you

would have them all about you." He liked the thought, undertook the office, and, with the help of a few hands to measure out the liquor, executed it to satisfaction, and never were prayers more generally and more punctually attended; so that I thought this method preferable to the punishment inflicted by some military laws for non-attendance on divine service.

I had hardly finished this business, and got my fort well stored with provisions, when I received a letter from the governor, acquainting me that he had called the Assembly, and wished my attendance there, if the posture of affairs on the frontier was such that my remaining there was no longer necessary. My friends, too, of the Assembly, pressing me by their letters to be, if possible, at the meeting, and my three intended forts being now completed, and the inhabitants contented to remain on their farms under that protection, I resolved to return; the more willingly, as a New England officer, Colonel Clapham, experienced in Indian war, being on a visit to our establishment, consented to accept the command. I gave him a commission, and, parading the garrison, had it read before them, and introduced him to them as an officer who, from his skill in military affairs, was much more fit to command them than myself; and, giving them a little exhortation, took my leave. I was escorted as far as Bethlehem, where I rested a few days to recover from the fatigue I had undergone. The first night, being in a good bed, I could hardly sleep, it was so different from my hard lodging on the floor of our hut at Gnaden wrapped only in a blanket or two.

While at Bethlehem, I inquired a little into the practice of the Moravians: some of them had accompanied me, and all were very kind to me. I found they worked for a common

stock, ate at common tables, and slept in common dormitories, great numbers together. In the dormitories I observed loopholes, at certain distances all along just under the ceiling, which I thought judiciously placed for change of air. I was at their church, where I was entertained with good music, the organ being accompanied with violins, hautboys, flutes, clarinets, etc. I understood that their sermons were not usually preached to mixed congregations of men, women, and children, as is our common practice, but that they assembled sometimes the married men, at other times their wives, then the young men, the young women, and the little children, each division by itself. The sermon I heard was to the latter, who came in and were placed in rows on benches; the boys under the conduct of a young man, their tutor, and the girls conducted by a young woman. The discourse seemed well adapted to their capacities, and was delivered in a pleasing familiar manner, coaxing them, as it were, to be good. They behaved very orderly, but looked pale and unhealthy, which made me suspect they were kept too much within doors, or not allowed sufficient exercise.

I inquired concerning the Moravian marriages, whether the report was true that they were by lot. I was told that lots were used only in particular cases; that generally, when a young man found himself disposed to marry, he informed the elders of his class, who consulted the elder ladies that governed the young women. As these elders of the different sexes were well acquainted with the tempers and dispositions of their respective pupils, they could best judge what matches were suitable, and their judgments were generally acquiesced in; but if, for example, it should happen that two or three young women were found to be equally proper for the young man, the lot was then recurred to. I objected, if

the matches are not made by the mutual choice of the parties, some of them may chance to be very unhappy. "And so they may," answered my informer, "if you let the parties choose for themselves;" which, indeed, I could not deny.

Being returned to Philadelphia, I found the association went on swimmingly, the inhabitants that were not Quakers having pretty generally come into it, formed themselves into companies, and chose their captains, lieutenants, and ensigns, according to the new law. Dr. B. visited me, and gave me an account of the pains he had taken to spread a general good liking to the law, and ascribed much to those endeavors. I had had the vanity to ascribe all to my *Dialogue*; however, not knowing but that he might be in the right, I let him enjoy his opinion, which I take to be generally the best way in such cases. The officers, meeting, chose me to be colonel of the regiment, which I this time accepted. I forget how many companies we had, but we paraded about twelve hundred well-looking men, with a company of artillery, who had been furnished with six brass field-pieces, which they had become so expert in the use of as to fire twelve times in a minute. The first time I reviewed my regiment they accompanied me to my house, and would salute me with some rounds fired before my door, which shook down and broke several glasses of my electrical apparatus. And my new honor proved not less brittle; for all our commissions were soon after broken by a repeal of the law, in England.

During this short time of my colonelship, being about to set out on a journey to Virginia, the officers of my regiment took it into their heads that it would be proper for them to escort me out of town, as far as the Lower Ferry. Just as I was getting on horseback they came to my door, between thirty and forty, mounted, and all in their uniforms. I had

not been previously acquainted with the project, or I should have prevented it, being naturally averse to the assuming of state on any occasion; and I was a good deal chagrined at their appearance, as I could not avoid their accompanying me. What made it worse was, that, as soon as we began to move, they drew their swords and rode with them naked all the way. Somebody wrote an account of this to the proprietor, and it gave him great offense. No such honor had been paid him when in the province, nor to any of his governors; and he said it was only proper to princes of the blood royal, which may be true for aught I knew, who was, and still am, ignorant of the etiquette in such cases.

This silly affair, however, greatly increased his rancor against me, which was before not a little, on account of my conduct in the Assembly respecting the exemption of his estate from taxation, which I had always opposed very warmly, and not without severe reflections on his meanness and injustice of contending for it. He accused me to the ministry as being the great obstacle to the king's service, preventing, by my influence in the House, the proper form of the bills for raising money, and he instanced this parade with my officers as a proof of my having an intention to take the government of the province out of his hands by force. He also applied to Sir Everard Fawkener, the postmaster-general, to deprive me of my office; but it had no other effect than to procure from Sir Everard a gentle admonition.

Notwithstanding the continual wrangle between the governor and the House, in which I, as a member, had so large a share, there still subsisted a civil intercourse between that gentleman and myself, and we never had any personal difference. I have sometimes since thought that his little or no resentment against me, for the answers it was known I drew

up to his messages, might be the effect of professional habit, and that, being bred a lawyer, he might consider us both as merely advocates for contending clients in a suit, he for the proprietaries and I for the Assembly. He would, therefore, sometimes call in a friendly way to advise with me on difficult points, and sometimes, though not often, take my advice.

We acted in concert to supply Braddock's army with provisions; and, when the shocking news arrived of his defeat, the governor sent in haste for me, to consult with him on measures for preventing the desertion of the back counties. I forget now the advice I gave: but I think it was, that Dunbar should be written to, and prevailed with, if possible, to post his troops on the frontiers for their protection, till, by re-enforcements from the colonies, he might be able to proceed on the expedition. And, after my return from the frontier, he would have had me undertake the conduct of such an expedition with provincial troops, for the reduction of Fort Duquesne, Dunbar and his men being otherwise employed; and he proposed to commission me as general. I had not so good an opinion of my military abilities as he professed to have, and I believe his professions must have exceeded his real sentiments; but probably he might think that my popularity would facilitate the raising of the men, and my influence in Assembly, the grant of money to pay them, and that, perhaps, without taxing the proprietary estate. Finding me not so forward to engage as he expected, the project was dropped, and he soon after left the government, being superseded by Captain Denny.

Before I proceed in relating the part I had in public affairs under this new governor's administration, it may not be amiss here to give some account of the rise and progress of my philosophical reputation.

## FRANKLIN'S ELECTRICAL EXPERIMENTS

In 1746, being at Boston, I met there with a Dr. Spence, who was lately arrived from Scotland, and showed me some electric experiments. They were imperfectly performed, as he was not very expert; but, being on a subject quite new to me, they equally surprised and pleased me. Soon after my return to Philadelphia, our library company received from Mr. Collinson, Fellow of the Royal Society of London, a present of a glass tube, with some account of the use of it in making such experiments. I eagerly seized the opportunity of repeating what I had seen at Boston; and, by much practice, acquired great readiness in performing those, also, which we had an account of from England, adding a number of new ones. I say much practice, for my house was continually full, for some time, with people who came to see these new wonders.

To divide a little this incumbrance among my friends, I caused a number of similar tubes to be blown at our glass-house, with which they furnished themselves, so that we had at length several performers. Among these, the principal was Mr. Kinnersley, an ingenious neighbor, whom, being out of business, I encouraged to undertake showing the experiments for money, and drew up for him two lectures, in which the experiments were ranged in such order, and accompanied with such explanations in such method, as that the foregoing should assist in comprehending the following. He procured an elegant apparatus for the purpose, in which all the little machines that I had roughly made for myself were nicely formed by instrument-makers. His lectures were well attended, and gave great satisfaction; and after some time he went through the colonies, exhibiting them in every capital

town, and picked up some money. In the West India islands, indeed, it was with difficulty the experiments could be made, from the general moisture of the air.

Obliged as we were to Mr. Collinson for his present of the tube, etc., I thought it right he should be informed of our success in using it, and wrote him several letters containing accounts of our experiments. He got them read in the Royal Society, where they were not at first thought worth so much notice as to be printed in their Transactions. One paper, which I wrote for Mr. Kinnersley, on the sameness of lightning with electricity, I sent to Dr. Mitchel, an acquaintance of mine, and one of the members also of that society, who wrote me word that it had been read, but was laughed at by the connoisseurs. The papers, however, being shown to Dr. Fothergill, he thought them of too much value to be stifled, and advised the printing of them. Mr. Collinson then gave them to Cave for publication in his Gentleman's Magazine; but he chose to print them separately in a pamphlet, and Dr. Fothergill wrote the preface. Cave, it seems, judged rightly for his profit, for by the additions that arrived afterward, they swelled to a quarto volume, which has had five editions, and cost him nothing for copy-money.

It was, however, some time before those papers were much taken notice of in England. A copy of them happening to fall into the hands of the Count de Buffon, a philosopher deservedly of great reputation in France, and, indeed, all over Europe, he prevailed with M. Dalibard to translate them into French, and they were printed at Paris. The publication offended the Abbé Nollet, preceptor in Natural Philosophy to the royal family, and an able experimenter, who had formed and published a theory of electricity, which then had the general vogue. He could not at first believe that such

a work came from America, and said it must have been fabricated by his enemies at Paris, to decry his system. Afterwards, having been assured that there really existed such a person as Franklin at Philadelphia, which he had doubted, he wrote and published a volume of Letters, chiefly addressed to me, defending his theory, and denying the verity of my experiments, and of the positions deduced from them.

I once purposed answering the abbé, and actually began the answer; but, on consideration that my writings contained a description of experiments which any one might repeat and verify, and if not to be verified, could not be defended; or of observations offered as conjectures, and not delivered dogmatically, therefore not laying me under any obligation to defend them; and reflecting that a dispute between two persons, writing in different languages, might be lengthened greatly by mistranslations, and thence misconceptions of one another's meaning, much of one of the abbé's letters being founded on an error in the translation, I concluded to let my papers shift for themselves, believing it was better to spend what time I could spare from public business in making new experiments, than in disputing about those already made. I therefore never answered M. Nollet, and the event gave me no cause to repent my silence; for my friend M. Le Roy, of the Royal Academy of Sciences, took up my cause and refuted him; my book was translated into the Italian, German, and Latin languages; and the doctrine it contained was by degrees universally adopted by the philosophers of Europe, in preference to that of the abbé; so that he lived to see himself the last of his sect, except Monsieur B———, of Paris, his pupil and immediate disciple.

What gave my book the more sudden and general celebrity was the success of one of its proposed experiments, made by

Messrs. Dalibard and Delor at Marly, for drawing lightning from the clouds. This engaged the public attention everywhere. M. Delor, who had an apparatus for experimental philosophy, and lectured in that branch of science, undertook to repeat what he called the *Philadelphia Experiments*; and, after they were performed before the king and court, all the curious of Paris flocked to see them. I will not swell this narrative with an account of that capital experiment, nor of the infinite pleasure I received in the success of a similar one I made soon after with a kite at Philadelphia, as both are to be found in the histories of electricity.

[This experiment Franklin made in the summer of 1752. He made a kite by fastening two cross sticks to a silk handkerchief, which would not suffer so much from rain as paper. To the upright stick an iron point was fastened. The string of the kite was of ordinary hemp except the lower end which was of silk (silk being, when dry, one of the most perfect non-conductors of electricity). Where the hempen string terminated, a key was fastened. With this apparatus, on the appearance of a thunder-storm approaching, Franklin went out into the fields accompanied by his son, to whom alone he communicated his intentions, well knowing the ridicule which generally awaits unsuccessful experiments in philosophy. Franklin, to avoid getting wet, took up his position in a shed. The kite was raised, a thunder-cloud passed over it, but no sign of electricity appeared. After waiting some time he almost despaired of success, when to his delight he saw the loose fibres of the hempen string suddenly become erect. He at once presented his knuckle to the key and received a strong spark. This he repeated many times. Then a jar was charged, a shock given from it, and all the experiments made which are usually performed with electricity.

FRANKLIN EXPERIMENTING WITH HIS KITE

Franklin thus proved the theory he had conceived that electricity and lightning are one and the same thing. From this he inferred that a pointed iron rod, properly put up from the ground so as to rise some distance above the roof of a house, would protect it in thunder-storms by acting as a conductor of electricity.

The invention was denounced as an impious attempt to control the artillery of heaven, just as it is laughed at by some scientists at the present day, who compare it to a horse-shoe fastened up for luck on a man's door; but such was George III.'s faith in Franklin's lightning-rod that, though he hated the philosopher with all his mind, heart, and strength, yet he put up his rods on Buckingham Palace and on the Royal Powder Magazines.

Franklin had, in fact, got the key to the clouds and the key to electrical science as well. Looking forward in prophetic vision to our day when electricity is used not only by the chemist, the physician, and the artisan, but when it lights our houses and our streets, transmits messages underneath the sea from continent to continent, and promises soon to supersede steam as a motor-power, Franklin, though he could not, indeed, anticipate these marvels in detail, yet saw enough to say: "There are no bounds (but what expense and labor give) to the force man may raise and use in the electrical way."]

Dr. Wright, an English physician, when at Paris, wrote to a friend, who was of the Royal Society, an account of the high esteem my experiments were in among the learned abroad, and of their wonder that my writings had been so little noticed in England. The society, on this, resumed the consideration of the letters that had been read to them; and the celebrated Dr. Watson drew up a summary account of

them, and of all I had afterwards sent to England on the subject, which he accompanied with some praise of the writer. This summary was then printed in their Transactions; and some members of the society in London, particularly the very ingenious Mr. Canton, having verified the experiment of procuring lightning from the clouds by a pointed rod, and acquainting them with the success, they soon made me more than amends for the slight with which they had before treated me. Without my having made any application for that honor, they chose me a member, and voted that I should be excused the customary payments, which would have amounted to twenty-five guineas; and ever since have given me their Transactions gratis. They also presented me with the gold medal of Sir Godfrey Copley for the year 1753, the delivery of which was accompanied by a very handsome speech of the president, Lord Macclesfield, wherein I was highly honored.

Our new governor, Captain Denny, brought over for me the before-mentioned medal from the Royal Society, which he presented to me at an entertainment given him by the city. He accompanied it with very polite expressions of his esteem for me, having, as he said, been long acquainted with my character. After dinner, when the company, as was customary at that time, were engaged in drinking, he took me aside into another room, and acquainted me that he had been advised by his friends in England to cultivate a friendship with me, as one who was capable of giving him the best advice, and of contributing most effectually to the making his administration easy; that he therefore desired of all things to have a good understanding with me, and he begged me to be assured of his readiness on all occasions to render me every service that might be in his power. He said much to me, also,

of the proprietor's good disposition towards the province, and of the advantage it might be to us all, and to me in particular, if the opposition that had been so long continued to his measures was dropped, and harmony restored between him and the people; in effecting which, it was thought no one could be more serviceable than myself; and I might depend on adequate acknowledgments and recompenses, etc., etc. The drinkers, finding we did not return immediately to the table, sent us a decanter of Madeira, which the governor made liberal use of, and in proportion became more profuse of his solicitations and promises.

My answers were to this purpose: that my circumstances, thanks to God, were such as to make proprietary favors unnecessary to me; and that, being a member of the Assembly, I could not possibly accept of any; that, however, I had no personal enmity to the proprietary, and that, whenever the public measures he proposed should appear to be for the good of the people, no one should espouse and forward them more zealously than myself; my past opposition having been founded on this, that the measures which had been urged were evidently intended to serve the proprietary interest, with great prejudice to that of the people; that I was much obliged to him (the governor) for his professions of regard to me, and that he might rely on every thing in my power to make his administration as easy as possible, hoping at the same time that he had not brought with him the same unfortunate instruction his predecessor had been hampered with.

On this he did not then explain himself; but when he afterwards came to do business with the Assembly, they appeared again, the disputes were renewed, and I was as active as ever in the opposition, being the penman, first, of the request to have a communication of the instructions, and then of the

remarks upon them, which may be found in the votes of the time, and in the Historical Review I afterward published. But between us personally no enmity arose: we were often together; he was a man of letters, had seen much of the world, and was very entertaining and pleasing in conversation. He gave me the first information that my old friend Jas. Ralph was still alive; that he was esteemed one of the best political writers in England; had been employed in the dispute between Prince Frederic and the king, and had obtained a pension of three hundred a year; that his reputation was indeed small as a poet, Pope having annihilated his poetry in the Dunciad; but his prose was thought as good as any man's.

## FRANKLIN APPOINTED AGENT TO REPRESENT THE COLONY IN ENGLAND

The Assembly finally finding the proprietary obstinately persisted in manacling their deputies with instructions inconsistent not only with the privileges of the people, but with the service of the crown, resolved to petition the king against them, and appointed me their agent to go over to England, to present and support the petition. The House had sent up a bill to the governor, granting a sum of sixty thousand pounds for the king's use (ten thousand pounds of which was subjected to the orders of the then general, Lord Loudoun), which the governor absolutely refused to pass, in compliance with his instructions.

I had agreed with Captain Morris, of the packet at New York, for my passage, and my stores were put on board, when Lord Loudoun arrived at Philadelphia, expressly, as he told me, to endeavor an accommodation between the governor and Assembly, that his majesty's service might not be

obstructed by their dissensions. Accordingly, he desired the governor and myself to meet him, that he might hear what was to be said on both sides. We met and discussed the business. In behalf of the Assembly, I urged all the various arguments that may be found in the public papers of that time, which were of my writing, and are printed with the minutes of the Assembly; and the governor pleaded his instructions, the bond he had given to observe them, and his ruin if he disobeyed, yet seemed not unwilling to hazard himself if Lord Loudoun would advise it. This his lordship did not choose to do, though I once thought I had nearly prevailed with him to do it; but finally he rather chose to urge the compliance of the Assembly; and he entreated me to use my endeavors with them for that purpose, declaring that he would spare none of the king's troops for the defense of our frontiers, and that, if we did not continue to provide for that defense ourselves, they must remain exposed to the enemy.

I acquainted the House with what had passed, and, presenting them with a set of resolutions I had drawn up, declaring our rights, and that we did not relinquish our claim to those rights, but only suspended the exercise of them on this occasion through *force*, against which we protested, they at length agreed to drop that bill, and frame another conformable to the proprietary instructions. This of course the governor passed, and I was then at liberty to proceed on my voyage. But, in the mean time, the packet had sailed with my sea-stores, which was some loss to me, and my only recompense was his lordship's thanks for my service, all the credit of obtaining the accommodation falling to his share.

He set out for New York before me; and, as the time for dispatching the packet-boats was at his disposition, and there were two then remaining there, one of which, he said, was to

sail very soon, I requested to know the precise time, that I might not miss her by any delay of mine. His answer was, "I have given out that she is to sail on Saturday next; but I may let you know, between ourselves, that if you are there by Monday morning, you will be in time, but do not delay longer." By some accidental hindrance at a ferry, it was Monday noon before I arrived, and I was much afraid she might have sailed, as the wind was fair: but I was soon made easy by the information that she was still in the harbor, and would not move till the next day. One would imagine that I was now on the very point of departing for Europe. I thought so; but I was not then so well acquainted with his lordship's character, of which *indecision* was one of the strongest features. I shall give some instances. It was about the beginning of April that I came to New York, and I think it was near the end of June before we sailed. There were then two of the packet-boats, which had been long in port, but were detained for the general's letters, which were always to be ready to-morrow. Another packet arrived; she too was detained; and, before we sailed, a fourth was expected. Ours was the first to be dispatched, as having been there longest. Passengers were engaged in all, and some extremely impatient to be gone, and the merchants uneasy about their letters, and the orders they had given for insurance (it being war time) for fall goods; but their anxiety availed nothing; his lordship's letters were not ready; and yet whoever waited on him found him always at his desk, pen in hand, and concluded he must needs write abundantly.

Going myself one morning to pay my respects, I found in his antechamber one Innis, a messenger of Philadelphia, who had come from thence express with a packet from Governor Denny for the general. He delivered to me some letters

from my friends there, which occasioned my inquiring when he was to return, and where he lodged, that I might send some letters by him. He told me he was ordered to call to-morrow at nine for the general's answer to the governor, and should set off immediately. I put my letters into his hands the same day. A fortnight after I met him again in the same place. "So, you are soon returned, Innis?" "*Returned!* no, I am not *gone* yet." "How so?" "I have called here by order every morning these two weeks past for his lordship's letter, and it is not yet ready." "Is it possible, when he is so great a writer? for I see him constantly at his writing-desk." "Yes," says Innis, "but he is like St. George on the signs, *always on horseback, and never rides on.*" This observation of the messenger was, it seems, well founded; for, when in England, I understood that Mr. Pitt gave it as one reason for removing this general, and sending generals Amherst and Wolfe, *that the minister never heard from him, and could not know what he was doing.*

This daily expectation of sailing, and all the three packets going down to Sandy Hook, to join the fleet there, the passengers thought it best to be on board, lest by a sudden order the ships should sail, and they be left behind. There, if I remember right, we were about six weeks, consuming our sea-stores, and obliged to procure more. At length the fleet sailed, the general and all his army on board, bound to Louisburg, with intent to besiege and take that fortress; all the packet-boats in company ordered to attend the general's ship, ready to receive his dispatches when they should be ready. We were out five days before we got a letter with leave to part, and then our ship quitted the fleet and steered for England. The other two packets he still detained, carried them with him to Halifax, where he stayed some time to

exercise the men in sham attacks upon sham forts, then altered his mind as to besieging Louisburg, and returned to New York, with all his troops, together with the two packets above mentioned, and all their passengers! During his absence the French and savages had taken Fort George, on the frontier of that province, and the savages had massacred many of the garrison after the capitulation.

I saw afterwards in London Captain Bonnell, who commanded one of those packets. He told me that, when he had been detained a month, he acquainted his lordship that his ship was grown foul, to a degree that must necessarily hinder her fast sailing, a point of consequence for a packet-boat, and requested an allowance of time to heave her down and clean her bottom. He was asked how long time that would require. He answered, three days. The general replied, "If you can do it in one day, I give leave; otherwise not; for you must certainly sail the day after to-morrow." So he never obtained leave, though detained afterwards from day to day during full three months.

I saw also in London one of Bonnel's passengers, who was so enraged against his lordship for deceiving and detaining him so long at New York, and then carrying him to Halifax and back again, that he swore he would sue him for damages. Whether he did or not, I never heard; but, as he represented the injury to his affairs, it was very considerable.

On the whole, I wondered much how such a man came to be intrusted with so important a business as the conduct of a great army; but, having since seen more of the great world, and the means of obtaining, and motives for giving, places, my wonder is diminished. General Shirley, on whom the command of the army devolved upon the death of Braddock, would, in my opinion, if continued in place, have made

a much better campaign than that of Loudoun in 1757, which was frivolous, expensive, and disgraceful to our nation beyond conception; for, though Shirley was not a bred soldier, he was sensible and sagacious in himself, and attentive to good advice from others, capable of forming judicious plans, and quick and active in carrying them into execution. Loudoun, instead of defending the colonies with his great army, left them totally exposed, while he paraded idly at Halifax, by which means Fort George was lost; besides, he deranged all our mercantile operations, and distressed our trade, by a long embargo on the exportation of provisions, on pretence of keeping supplies from being obtained by the enemy, but in reality for beating down their price in favor of the contractors, in whose profits, it was said, perhaps from suspicion only, he had a share. And, when at length the embargo was taken off, by neglecting to send notice of it to Charleston, the Carolina fleet was detained near three months longer, whereby their bottoms were so much damaged by the worm that a great part of them foundered in their passage home.

Shirley was, I believe, sincerely glad of being relieved from so burdensome a charge as the conduct of an army must be to a man unacquainted with military business. I was at the entertainment given by the city of New York to Lord Loudoun, on his taking upon him the command. Shirley, though thereby superseded, was present also. There was a great company of officers, citizens, and strangers, and, some chairs having been borrowed in the neighborhood, there was one among them very low, which fell to the lot of Mr. Shirley. Perceiving it as I sat by him, I said, "They have given you, sir, too low a seat." "No matter," says he, "Mr. Franklin, I find *a low seat* the easiest."

While I was, as afore-mentioned, detained at New York, I received all the accounts of the provisions, etc., that I had furnished to Braddock, some of which accounts could not sooner be obtained from the different persons I had employed to assist in the business. I presented them to Lord Loudoun, desiring to be paid the balance. He caused them to be regularly examined by the proper officer, who, after comparing every article with its voucher, certified them to be right; and the balance due for which his lordship promised to give me an order on the paymaster. This was, however, put off from time to time; and, though I called often for it by appointment, I did not get it. At length, just before my departure, he told me he had, on better consideration, concluded not to mix his accounts with those of his predecessors. "And you," says he, "when in England, have only to exhibit your accounts at the treasury, and you will be paid immediately."

I mentioned, but without effect, the great and unexpected expense I had been put to by being detained so long at New York, as a reason for my desiring to be presently paid; and on my observing that it was not right I should be put to any further trouble or delay in obtaining the money I had advanced, as I charged no commission for my service, "O, sir," says he, "you must not think of persuading us that you are no gainer; we understand better those affairs, and know that every one concerned in supplying the army finds means, in the doing it, to fill his own pockets." I assured him that was not my case, and that I had not pocketed a farthing; but he appeared clearly not to believe me; and, indeed, I have since learnt that immense fortunes are often made in such employments. As to my balance, I am not paid it to this day, of which more hereafter.

Our captain of the packet had boasted much, before we sailed, of the swiftness of his ship; unfortunately, when we came to sea, she proved the dullest of ninety-six sail, to his no small mortification. After many conjectures respecting the cause, when we were near another ship almost as dull as ours, which, however, gained upon us, the captain ordered all hands to come aft, and stand as near the ensign staff as possible. We were, passengers included, about forty persons. While we stood there, the ship mended her pace, and soon left her neighbor far behind, which proved clearly what our captain suspected, that she was loaded too much by the head. The casks of water, it seems, had been all placed forward; these he therefore ordered to be moved further aft, on which, the ship recovered her character, and proved the best sailer in the fleet.

The captain said she had once gone at the rate of thirteen knots, which is accounted thirteen miles per hour. We had on board, as a passenger, Captain Kennedy, of the Navy, who contended that it was impossible, and that no ship ever sailed so fast, and that there must have been some error in the division of the log-line, or some mistake in heaving the log. A wager ensued between the two captains, to be decided when there should be sufficient wind. Kennedy thereupon examined rigorously the log-line, and, being satisfied with that, he determined to throw the log himself. Accordingly some days after, when the wind blew very fair and fresh, and the captain of the packet, Lutwidge, said he believed she then went at the rate of thirteen knots, Kennedy made the experiment, and owned his wager lost.

The above fact I give for the sake of the following observation. It has been remarked, as an imperfection in the art of ship-building, that it can never be known, till she is tried,

whether a new ship will or will not be a good sailer; for that the model of a good-sailing ship has been exactly followed in a new one, which has proved, on the contrary, remarkably dull. I apprehend that this may partly be occasioned by the different opinions of seamen respecting the modes of lading, rigging, and sailing of a ship; each has his system; and the same vessel, laden by the judgment and orders of one captain, shall sail better or worse than when by the orders of another. Besides, it scarce ever happens that a ship is formed, fitted for the sea, and sailed by the same person. One man builds the hull, another rigs her, a third lades and sails her. No one of these has the advantage of knowing all the ideas and experience of the others, and, therefore, can not draw just conclusions from a combination of the whole.

Even in the simple operation of sailing when at sea, I have often observed different judgments in the officers who commanded the successive watches, the wind being the same. One would have the sails trimmed sharper or flatter than another, so that they seemed to have no certain rule to govern by. Yet I think a set of experiments might be instituted, first, to determine the most proper form of the hull for swift sailing; next, the best dimensions and properest place for the masts; then the form and quantity of sails, and their position, as the wind may be; and, lastly, the disposition of the lading. This is an age of experiments, and I think a set accurately made and combined would be of great use. I am persuaded, therefore, that ere long some ingenious philosopher will undertake it, to whom I wish success.

We were several times chased in our passage, but outsailed every thing, and in thirty days had soundings. We had a good observation, and the captain judged himself so near our port, Falmouth, that, if we made a good run in the night, we

might be off the mouth of that harbor in the morning, and by running in the night might escape the notice of the enemy's privateers, who often cruised near the entrance of the channel. Accordingly, all the sail was set that we could possibly make, and the wind being very fresh and fair, we went right before it, and made great way. The captain, after his observation, shaped his course, as he thought, so as to pass wide of the Scilly Isles; but it seems there is sometimes a strong indraught setting up St. George's Channel, which deceives seamen and caused the loss of Sir Cloudesley Shovel's squadron. This indraught was probably the cause of what happened to us.

We had a watchman placed in the bow, to whom they often called, "*Look well out before there*," and he as often answered, "*Ay, ay*;" but perhaps had his eyes shut, and was half asleep at the time, they sometimes answering, as is said, mechanically; for he did not see a light just before us, which had been hid by the studding-sails from the man at the helm, and from the rest of the watch, but by an accidental yaw of the ship was discovered, and occasioned a great alarm, we being very near it, the light appearing to me as big as a cart-wheel. It was midnight, and our captain fast asleep; but Captain Kennedy, jumping upon deck, and seeing the danger, ordered the ship to wear round, all sails standing; an operation dangerous to the masts, but it carried us clear, and we escaped shipwreck, for we were running right upon the rocks on which the lighthouse was erected. This deliverance impressed me strongly with the utility of lighthouses, and made me resolve to encourage the building more of them in America, if I should live to return there.

In the morning it was found by the soundings, etc., that we were near our port, but a thick fog hid the land from our

sight. About nine o'clock the fog began to rise, and seemed to be lifted up from the water like the curtain at a playhouse, discovering underneath, the town of Falmouth, the vessels in its harbor, and the fields that surrounded it. This was a most pleasing spectacle to those who had been so long without any other prospects than the uniform view of a vacant ocean, and it gave us the more pleasure as we were now free from the anxieties which the state of war occasioned.

I set out immediately, with my son, for London, and we only stopped a little by the way to view Stonehenge on Salisbury Plain, and Lord Pembroke's house and gardens, with his very curious antiquities at Wilton. We arrived in London the 27th of July, 1757.

AS SOON as I was settled in a lodging, Mr. Charles had provided for me, I went to visit Dr. Fothergill, to whom I was strongly recommended, and whose counsel respecting my proceedings I was advised to obtain. He was against an immediate complaint to government, and thought the proprietaries should first be personally applied to, who might possibly be induced by the interposition and persuasion of some private friends to accommodate matters amicably. I then waited on my old friend and correspondent, Mr. Peter Collinson, who told me that John Hanbury, the great Virginia merchant, had requested to be informed when I should arrive, that he might carry me to Lord Granville's, who was then President of the Council and wished to see me as soon as possible. I agreed to go with him the next morning. Accordingly Mr. Hanbury called for me and took me in his carriage to that nobleman's, who received me with great civility; and after some questions respecting the present state of affairs in America and discourse thereupon, he said to me: "You Americans have wrong ideas of the nature of your constitution; you contend that the king's instructions to his governors are not laws, and think yourselves at liberty to regard or disregard them at your own discretion. But those instructions are not like the pocket instructions given to a minister going abroad, for regulating his conduct in some trifling point of ceremony. They are first drawn up by judges learned in the laws; they are then considered, debated, and perhaps amended in Council, after which they are signed by the king. They are then, so far as they relate to you, the

*law of the land*, for the king is the LEGISLATOR OF THE COLONIES." I told his lordship this was new doctrine to me. I had always understood from our charters that our laws were to be made by our Assemblies, to be presented indeed to the king for his royal assent, but that being once given, the king could not repeal or alter them. And as the Assemblies could not make permanent laws without his assent, so neither could he make a law for them without theirs. He assured me I was totally mistaken. I did not think so, however, and his lordship's conversation having a little alarmed me as to what might be the sentiments of the court concerning us, I wrote it down as soon as I returned to my lodgings. I recollected that about 20 years before, a clause in a bill brought into Parliament by the ministry had proposed to make the king's instructions laws in the colonies, but the clause was thrown out by the Commons, for which we adored them as our friends and friends of liberty, till by their conduct towards us in 1765 it seemed that they had refused that point of sovereignty to the king only that they might reserve it for themselves.

After some days, Dr. Fothergill having spoken to the proprietaries, they agreed to a meeting with me at Mr. T. Penn's house in Spring Garden. The conversation at first consisted of mutual declarations of disposition to reasonable accommodations, but I suppose each party had its own ideas of what should be meant by *reasonable*. We then went into consideration of our several points of complaint, which I enumerated. The proprietaries justified their conduct as well as they could, and I the Assembly's. We now appeared very wide, and so far from each other in our opinions as to discourage all hope of agreement. However, it was concluded that I should give them the heads of our complaints in writing; and they promised then to consider them. I did so soon

after, but they put the paper into the hands of their solicitor, Ferdinand John Paris, who managed for them all their law business in their great suit with the neighboring proprietary of Maryland, Lord Baltimore, which had subsisted 70 years, and wrote for them all their papers and messages in their dispute with the Assembly. He was a proud, angry man, and as I had occasionally in the answers of the Assembly treated his papers with some severity, they being really weak in point of argument and haughty in expression, he had conceived a mortal enmity to me, which discovering itself whenever we met, I declined the proprietaries' proposal that he and I should discuss the heads of complaint between our two selves, and refused treating with any one but them. They then by his advice put the paper into the hands of the Attorney and Solicitor-General for their opinion and counsel upon it, where it lay unanswered a year, wanting eight days, during which time I made frequent demands of an answer from the proprietaries, but without obtaining any other than that they had not yet received the opinion of the Attorney and Solicitor-General. What it was when they did receive it I never learnt, for they did not communicate it to me, but sent a long message to the Assembly drawn and signed by Paris, reciting my paper, complaining of its want of formality, as a rudeness on my part, and giving a flimsy justification of their conduct, adding that they should be willing to accommodate matters if the Assembly would send out *some person of candor* to treat with them for that purpose, intimating thereby that I was not such.

The want of formality or rudeness was, probably, my not having addressed the paper to them with their assumed titles of True and Absolute Proprietaries of the Province of Pennsylvania, which I omitted as not thinking it necessary in a

paper, the intention of which was only to reduce to a certainty by writing, what in conversation I had delivered *viva voce*.

But during this delay, the Assembly having prevailed with Governor Denny to pass an act taxing the proprietary estate in common with the estates of the people, which was the grand point in dispute, they omitted answering the message.

When this act however came over, the proprietaries, counseled by Paris, determined to oppose its receiving the royal assent. Accordingly they petitioned the king in Council, and a hearing was appointed in which two lawyers were employed by them against the act, and two by me in support of it. They alleged that the act was intended to load the proprietary estate in order to spare those of the people, and that if it were suffered to continue in force, and the proprietaries, who were in odium with the people, left to their mercy in proportioning the taxes, they would inevitably be ruined. We replied that the act had no such intention, and would have no such effect; that the assessors were honest and discreet men under an oath to assess fairly and equitably, and that any advantage each of them might expect in lessening his own tax by augmenting that of the proprietaries was too trifling to induce them to perjure themselves. This is the purport of what I remember as urged by both sides, except that we insisted strongly on the mischievous consequences that must attend a repeal, for that the money, £100,000, being printed and given to the king's use, expended in his service, and now spread among the people, the repeal would strike it dead in their hands to the ruin of many, and the total discouragement of future grants: and the selfishness of the proprietors in soliciting such a general catastrophe, merely from a groundless fear of their estate being taxed too highly, was insisted on in the strongest terms. On this, Lord Mansfield,

one of the counsel, rose, and beckoning me took me into the clerk's chamber, while the lawyers were pleading, and asked me if I was really of opinion that no injury would be done the proprietary estate in the execution of the act. I said certainly. "Then," says he, "you can have little objection to enter into an engagement to assure that point." I answered, "None at all." He then called in Paris, and after some discourse, his lordship's proposition was accepted on both sides; a paper to the purpose was drawn up by the Clerk of the Council, which I signed with Mr. Charles, who was also an Agent of the Province for their ordinary affairs, when Lord Mansfield returned to the Council Chamber, where finally the law was allowed to pass. Some changes were however recommended and we also engaged they should be made by a subsequent law, but the Assembly did not think them necessary; for one year's tax having been levied by the act before the order of Council arrived, they appointed a committee to examine the proceedings of the assessors, and on this committee they put several particular friends of the proprietaries. After a full enquiry, they unanimously signed a report that they found the tax had been assessed with perfect equity.

The Assembly looked upon my entering into the first part of the engagement, as an essential service to the Province, since it secured the credit of the paper money then spread over all the country. They gave me their thanks in form when I returned. But the proprietaries were enraged at Governor Denny for having passed the act, and turned him out with threats of suing him for breach of instructions which he had given bond to observe. He, however, having done it at the instance of the General, and for His Majesty's service, and having some powerful interest at court, despised the threats and they were never put in execution.

# CONTINUATION OF FRANKLIN'S LIFE, 1757–1790

## FRANKLIN'S FIRST MISSION TO ENGLAND, 1757–1762

FRANKLIN, it will be remembered, says that he went to England to present and support the petition of the legislature of Pennsylvania against the policy of the proprietaries of the colony, who persisted in refusing to permit their estates to be taxed.

This appeal to the king had been forced upon the legislature by the exigencies of the French and Indian War. The vital question then was whether France or England should obtain possession of the New World. These two great rival powers now stood face to face engaged in a desperate contest for the mastery. On the one hand, the English colonists already possessed the greater part of the Atlantic coast; on the other, the French held Canada and claimed besides the whole country watered by the Mississippi and its tributaries —in other words, the greater part of what now constitutes the United States. To defend this vast region from all settlers except those of their own nationality, the French built and garrisoned a chain of sixty or more forts extending from Quebec to New Orleans. Later, they began a second chain stretching southward from what is now Erie to the point since named Pittsburgh, in order to prevent English emigrants from settling in the Ohio valley. It was resistance to

these preposterous and exclusive claims of France which brought on the war. The English colonists found that they must either fight or tamely submit to be cooped in between the mountain ranges of the Alleghanies and the sea, with the further prospect of being eventually driven out even from that narrow strip of territory. Washington, then a young man of twenty-two, had struck the first blow against the French occupation of the valley of the Ohio, but was overpowered by superior numbers and forced to surrender.

Great Britain now saw that half-way measures would accomplish nothing, and made ready to fight in earnest. It was high time she did, for the struggle had at last actually begun which was to decide whether America should become a French province or should belong to that English-speaking race which first set foot on the continent, first permanently settled its soil, and was now fast peopling its eastern seaboard from Maine to the borders of Florida.

In this fierce duel between the two leading nations of Europe respecting the possession of this country, the first and most important point for Pennsylvania to determine was how to raise money to protect herself from threatened invasion both from the French and from their dreaded allies the Indians. The proprietaries, Thomas and Richard Penn, who resided in England, owned vast tracts of land in the colony, extending in the aggregate over several thousand square miles, and estimated by Franklin to be worth not less than $50,000,000. On this enormous property, a part of which was yielding a handsome income, the proprietaries refused to pay a single penny in taxes, yet they had the effrontery to insist that the colonists, who were mostly poor men, should defend it for them by troops raised and maintained at their own expense!

As the Assembly declared, such a demand was "abhorrent to common justice, common reason, and common sense." It was made, too, in the midst of war, when the colony was battling for life, with "the knife of the savages at her throat," her "soldiers ready to mutiny for want of pay," her "people flying in despair from the frontier for want of protection."

Franklin's mission was to protest against the selfish greed of the proprietaries and to seek redress. Though he was past fifty he was still in the prime of vigorous life, and was peculiarly fitted for the work he had set about. Such an undertaking required boldness, capacity, and discretion. Franklin had all three. First, he had shown himself a brave man, one who had the moral courage to confess his mistakes—his "errata" as he called them—and the moral energy to conquer them. Next, he had the genius of good sense; for twenty years, thousands, not only of American farmers but of French and English workingmen, had squared their daily lives by the shrewd maxims of "Poor Richard's Almanac." Lastly, he had discretion; for early in youth, as he himself tells us, he had learned when and where to *stoop*.

Such, in addition to his reputation for science, were the qualities for which Franklin was known at home. Yale and Harvard had made him Master of Arts. Abroad he had also gained a name. The common people knew him well. The Royal Society of London also knew him, for he was enrolled among their distinguished foreign members. More than thirty years before, Franklin had walked the streets of that great city a poor and friendless boy. He was now to enter it again, sure of a welcome as the American who had taken the first decided step toward subjecting the electrical forces of nature to the service of man.

Yet such were the obstacles against which he had to contend that it was nearly three years after Franklin's arrival in London before he could obtain a hearing from the government. During that time he was not idle; but, in addition to carrying on his scientific experiments, he was busy with pen and tongue, doing his utmost to influence the ministry and public opinion in favor not only of the colony he represented but of the colonies generally.

Meanwhile, in recognition of the important electrical discoveries which he had made, the University of St. Andrews, the oldest in Scotland, conferred on him that degree which has ever since made him known to the world as Dr. Franklin. A few months later Franklin went on a journey to Scotland, where he made the acquaintance of Hume and Robertson, the eminent historians, and of Lord Kames, also known as a man of letters. It was while stopping at the last-named gentleman's house that Franklin recited the following parable, which not a few people innocently supposed to be a part of the Old Testament which they had unaccountably overlooked. This idea was strengthened by the Doctor's habit of repeating it with an open Bible in his hand, as if reading it, in order that he might hear the comments of his surprised listeners on this unfamiliar incident in Scripture history.

### The Parable

"And it came to pass after these things, that Abraham sat in the door of his tent, about the going down of the sun.

"And behold, a man, bowed with age, came from the way of the wilderness, leaning on a staff.

"And Abraham arose and met him, and said unto him,

'Turn in, I pray thee, and wash thy feet, and tarry all night, and thou shalt arise early on the morrow, and go on thy way.'

"But the man said, 'Nay, for I will abide under this tree.'

"And Abraham pressed him greatly; so he turned, and they went into the tent, and Abraham baked unleavened bread, and they did eat.

"And when Abraham saw that the man blessed not God, he said unto him, 'Wherefore dost thou not worship the most high God, Creator of heaven and earth?'

"And the man answered and said, 'I do not worship the God thou speakest of, neither do I call upon his name; for I have made to myself a god, which abideth alway in mine house, and provideth me with all things.'

"And Abraham's zeal was kindled against the man, and he arose and fell upon him, and drove him forth with blows into the wilderness.

"And at midnight God called unto Abraham, saying, 'Abraham, where is the stranger?'

"And Abraham answered and said, 'Lord, he would not worship thee, neither would he call upon thy name; therefore have I driven him out from before my face into the wilderness.'

"And God said, 'Have I borne with him these hundred ninety and eight years; and nourished him and clothed him, notwithstanding his rebellion against me; and couldst not thou, that art thyself a sinner, bear with him one night?'"

While Franklin was thus working and waiting, the contest with the French was practically drawing to a close. It had begun with bad management and with humiliating disasters, but William Pitt, the great English war minister, had reformed that, and the thunder of his guns was now heard all round the horizon. In honor of the statesman who had thus

put new life into the army, the British forces when they captured Fort Duquesne from the French named it Fort Pitt, which not long after became Pittsburgh. In 1759 Pitt planned a campaign for the conquest of Canada. The enterprise, like everything which he undertook, was successful. Quebec surrendered to the gallant General Wolfe, who gave his life for the prize, and the next year the subjugation of the province was complete. The French, however, were still left in possession of the country. The question now before Parliament was whether they should be allowed to retain it, or whether England should take it as they already had Nova Scotia. The debate waxed hot. The timid urged that the French should not be disturbed, lest if they were driven out the American colonies might soon become too populous and too powerful to be governed by a king three thousand miles away. Pitt, on the other hand, who had nothing small or pusillanimous in his nature, urged the retention of Canada by the English as a means of extending the greatness and glory of the British Empire.

Franklin took the same view. He saw that if France kept the smallest foothold in America there would always be danger of another war for supremacy. With this conviction, he wrote to his friend, Lord Kames: "No one can more sincerely rejoice than I do, on the reduction of Canada; and this is not merely as I am a colonist, but as I am a Briton. I have long been of opinion that *the foundations of the future grandeur and stability of the British Empire lie in America; and though, like other foundations, they are low and little now, they are nevertheless broad and strong enough to support the greatest political structure that human wisdom ever erected.* I am therefore by no means for restoring Canada. If we keep it, all the country from the St. Lawrence to the Mississippi

will in another century be filled with British people. Britain itself will become vastly more populous, by the immense increase of its commerce; the Atlantic sea will be covered with your trading-ships; and your naval power, thence continually increasing, will extend your influence round the whole globe, and awe the world!" How far this letter, together with a subsequent printed pamphlet on the same subject, may have influenced the English government, we cannot judge; but a few years later Parliament decided to keep Canada, and thereby the unchecked growth of the American colonies in population, prosperity, and self-government was effectually, though perhaps unintentionally, secured.

During Franklin's residence in England, the Pennsylvania Assembly had at length succeeded in getting the governor to give his assent to a bill levying a tax of one hundred thousand pounds to meet the expenses of the war, the estates of the proprietaries to be assessed at the same rate as those of the other landowners of the colony. In their disappointment and rage at such an unexpected result, the proprietaries forthwith dismissed the offending governor from office. But they could not at once undo what he had sanctioned, and the bill bearing his signature was sent by the colony to the king for his approval, since without his consent no law made by the province of Pennsylvania could be enforced. Now came the real battle between Franklin and the proprietaries. The process through which every colonial act had to pass before it obtained the royal signature, if, indeed, it ever got it, was long, tedious, often expensive, and always vexatious. First, it must be laid before the Board of Trade that they might decide whether or not it would be prejudicial to the interests of English exporters and commercial agents, or would in any way tend to impair the revenue of the crown. If the act was

so fortunate as to pass that ordeal without material alteration, it was next sent to the king's solicitor, who examined it minutely to see if it encroached in the smallest degree on the royal power. Should that question be settled favorably, the act was then returned to the Board of Trade for a second and sharper examination. If that body, after a microscopic inspection and analysis of every clause, could find no objection, the act was then forwarded to the king's council, who, after due discussion and deliberation, reported a final decision. In this particular case the proprietaries fought the measure, tooth and nail, at every step of the whole round of wearisome procedure. They had money, they had influence; and if money and influence combined could have killed the act, they would have dispatched it; but notwithstanding all their efforts, Franklin had the satisfaction of at last getting the law confirmed by the king's authority. Such a victory might well give him cause to exult. It meant that henceforth Thomas and Richard Penn could no longer boast that they possessed a privilege which no English nobleman would have dared claim in Great Britain,—that of holding their lands exempt from public charges while they continued to be protected at the public cost.

Now that the object of his mission was attained, Franklin felt at liberty to take some recreation. He accordingly visited the continent, where he spent several months in travel in Holland and Flanders. The next year he prepared to return to Philadelphia.

The university of Oxford now followed the example of St. Andrews in bestowing an honorary degree on the man who had proved that a printing-office may sometimes educate as well as a college, or perhaps, better. The English government showed its good will by appointing his son, William

Franklin, who had accompanied his father as secretary, to the governorship of the colony of New Jersey. William had, in fact, greatly coveted and diligently sought this honor, contrary to the Doctor's advice, who feared, with only too good reason, that such a favor would bind his son to the throne rather than to the colonies. "Think what this whistle will some day cost you," said he to the young office-seeker. "Why not rather be a carpenter or a plowman, if the fortune I leave you prove insufficient? The man who works for his living is at least independent." But the wise counsel had no effect. The temptation of power and title were irresistible, and when Doctor Franklin sailed for home, about the end of August, 1762, the son who remained for a short time in London was no longer plain William Franklin, but his "Excellency, the Governor." From this date the paths of father and son began to diverge more and more, until finally the king of England virtually owned the latter body and soul.

## FRANKLIN'S TWO YEARS' WORK AT HOME, 1762–1764

Franklin wrote Lord Kames: "On the 1st of November [1762] I arrived safe and well at my own home, after an absence of near six years; found my wife and daughter well,—the latter grown quite a woman, with many amiable accomplishments acquired in my absence,—and my friends as hearty and affectionate as ever, with whom my house was filled for many days, to congratulate me on my return. I had been chosen yearly during my absence to represent the city of Philadelphia in our provincial Assembly; and on my appearance in the House, they voted me three thousand pounds sterling for my services in England, and their thanks, delivered by the speaker."

Early in the spring, Franklin, who still retained his position of postmaster-general, set out on a lengthy journey relating to the business of that department. A number of years before, he had startled the good people of Philadelphia by proposing to run a "stage wagon" to carry the mail once a week from that place to Boston. It was thought then that the Doctor was pushing matters altogether too fast, and conservative citizens shook their heads doubtfully at such an innovation in old-established customs. Up to that time the usual way of transporting the mails was on horseback. The rider often had no regular day for starting, but prudently waited until letters enough had accumulated to pay the expense of the trip. Not infrequently these riders were gray-haired men, who, seeing no great occasion for haste, used to drop their reins on their horses' necks, and improve the time by knitting woolen mittens or stockings as their patient beasts jogged slowly on. When the postman reached his destination, his bag of say half-a-dozen letters with one or two newspapers would be delivered, and the minister of the place, or perhaps the landlord of its single tavern, would read the news aloud to an interested group of listeners.

Franklin, who had something of the energy of his favorite electricity, was bent on making the entire post-office department more prompt and efficient. To that end he started off on a journey of inspection covering some sixteen hundred miles. The Doctor traveled in a light two-wheeled vehicle, accompanied by his daughter, Sally, who usually rode on horseback by his side. In this way he spent the summer of 1763. He does not tell us how many post-offices he visited, but it could not have been many, since the whole number, in the entire country, nearly thirty years later, was only seventy-five. To-day there are over fifty-five thousand, handling

about six hundred millions of letters annually. The postage in Franklin's time was no trifling charge, the rate for a letter between Philadelphia and Charleston being twenty-five cents, and proportionately high for shorter distances. These rates necessarily deterred people from writing any oftener than they were absolutely compelled to do, and the result was, that up to the date when Franklin became postmaster-general the department had never paid expenses. He set to work with his accustomed vigor, and eventually so remodeled and improved the service that, when he was ejected from office just before the outbreak of the Revolution, the American post-office was yielding King George III. a handsome profit.

In December of the year in which he was thus engaged a tragic affair occurred, which roused Franklin as nothing had before, and showed that beneath the philosopher's calm exterior he shared those feelings which made the Roman poet declare, "I am a man, and whatever concerns humanity concerns me." The settlers of the Pennsylvania frontier towns of Peckstang (or Paxton) and Donegall had become excited over stories of Indian outrages, many of which were unfortunately but too true. In the fury and thirst for vengeance, roused by these accounts, the "Paxton Boys," as they were called, determined to destroy every Indian that should fall into their hands. It happened that not far from them there was living the feeble remnant of a peaceful tribe that many years before had made a treaty of friendship with William Penn, which, as they expressed it, was to continue "as long as the sun should shine in the heavens or the waters run in the rivers." In open and unprovoked violation of that treaty, which the tribe had always faithfully kept, the "Paxton Boys" now planned an attack on these inoffensive neighbors.

One of the Indians, an aged chief named Shehaes, was told of the impending peril, but refused to believe it. He said, "It is impossible; there are, indeed, Indians in the woods, who would kill me and mine, if they could get at us, because of my friendship to the English; but the English will wrap me in their matchcoat, and save me from all danger."

Notwithstanding the poor Indian's trust in the good faith of all white men, the cowardly attack was made and everyone who was found was slain. The authorities now interposed and removed those who had escaped to the county workhouse for safety. But their enemies had sworn to exterminate them, and not long after their arrival a band of armed men burst in the door of the building and began an indiscriminate slaughter. "When," writes Franklin, "the poor wretches saw they had no protection nigh, nor could possibly escape, and being without the least weapon for defense, they divided their little families, the children clinging to their parents. They fell on their knees, protested their innocence, declared their love to the English, and that in their whole lives they had never done them injury; and in this posture they all received the hatchet. Men, women, and little children were every one inhumanly murdered in cold blood! The barbarous men who committed the atrocious act, in defiance of government, and of all laws human and divine, and to the eternal disgrace of their country and their color, then mounted their horses, huzzaed in triumph, as if they had gained a victory, and rode off *unmolested!*"

Such a deed, as Franklin declared, would not have been perpetrated even by the heathen of Africa; for, he says, at least one man would have been found with sense, spirit, and humanity enough to stand up in their defense.

"In short," he adds, "these peaceful Indians would have

been safe in any part of the known world, except in the neighborhood of the *Christian white savages* of Peckstang and Donegall!"

Alarmed for their safety, one hundred and forty friendly Indians, some of whom were members of the Moravian church, and therefore non-resistants, now sought protection in Philadelphia. But the men who had begun the massacre threatened to invade the town and put these fugitives to death. With the governor's approval Franklin formed a military association of nearly a thousand armed citizens in their defense. Quite a number of those enrolled were Quakers, who, though opposed to war, were, nevertheless, fully determined not to stand calmly by and see these harmless Indians deliberately murdered. This decided action on the part of the Philadelphians intimidated the "Paxton Boys." They thought it prudent to halt before attempting to march into the town. The authorities seized the favorable opportunity and sent a commission, headed by Franklin, to confer with the rioters, who were soon persuaded to disperse. Thus Franklin's vigorous protest, backed by his equally vigorous action, saved many lives.

The governor, however, fearing some new outbreak, now recommended the passage of a militia law, organizing citizens into regular companies, for the maintenance of public order and their own defense. The Assembly accordingly drafted a bill to that effect, but, to their astonishment, the governor refused to sign it unless he was empowered to appoint all of the officers, with the further promise that trials should be by court-martial, several offenses being made punishable by death. The Assembly declined to grant the governor such arbitrary and dangerous authority, and the bill was lost.

As money was now sorely needed for meeting the expenses of the Indian war, it was proposed that fifty thousand pounds be borrowed, and that a land tax be levied toward payment of the debt. In this tax the estates of the proprietaries were to be included, according to the decision which Franklin had obtained from the crown. The governor, however, refused to give his assent to the proposed law unless the proprietary lands, no matter how valuable they might be, should be assessed at the same rate as the poorest tracts of swamp, or most worthless sand or rock barrens, held by any of the colonists. The Assembly remonstrated against such flagrant favoritism, but to no purpose, and they were finally obliged to make the concession in order to get means to pay the men. The legislature was now fully convinced that the proprietaries had no intention of keeping faith with them, and that they would always find some way of evading any law which required them to bear their just proportion of the expenses of the colonial government. The Assembly, therefore, passed a series of resolutions declaring that the interests of the province demanded that all power should be taken from the proprietaries and placed directly in the hands of the king.

During the recess of the Assembly, Franklin issued a pamphlet entitled "Cool Thoughts," in which he denounced the proprietary system of government as radically bad. The proprietaries, he said, constantly interfered, and blocked the wheels of wholesome legislation, so that when supplies were urgently demanded for the defense of the colony they invariably replied, "Unless our private interests in certain particulars are secured, *nothing shall be done.*" For this reason Franklin advised his fellow-citizens to petition the king "to take this province under his Majesty's immediate protection and government."

This proposition roused the proprietary party to strain every nerve against Franklin, and in the election of members of the Assembly, in 1764, he was defeated by a majority of about twenty-five votes out of four thousand. Their victory, however, was dearly bought, for when the Assembly met they at once appointed Franklin to draft a petition such as he had suggested, and they furthermore chose him to be the special agent of Pennsylvania to carry the petition to England, and present it to the king.

Less than a fortnight afterwards [Nov. 7, 1764], Franklin left Philadelphia for Chester, escorted by about three hundred citizens, who accompanied him to the place of embarkation. From on board ship he wrote his daughter, Sally, "The affectionate leave taken of me by so many friends at Chester was very endearing. God bless them, and all Pennsylvania!" A month later he was established in his old lodgings at Mrs. Stevenson's, No. 27 Craven Street, London.

## FRANKLIN'S SECOND MISSION TO ENGLAND, 1764–1775

Franklin at once set about the business on which he had been sent, and was encouraged to believe that the crown would listen favorably to the petition for the proposed change of the government of Pennsylvania. But before the matter could be properly considered, a question arose which engaged the entire attention of both England and America to the exclusion of every other political subject. The French War had cost the people of Great Britain many millions. Taxes had in consequence risen to such a height and were levied on so many articles that the prime minister confessed that he did not know where to impose another penny. The

distress of the country under such a burden was very great, and serious bread-riots had broken out among multitudes of half-starved, unemployed laborers. Although France had been beaten at every point of the contest, and had been compelled to surrender all of her American possessions to the English, except two small islands which had been left her to dry fish on, yet the British government thought it best to maintain a force of 10,000 men to protect the colonies, and it was proposed that the colonies should be taxed for that purpose. Against this the inhabitants not only of Pennsylvania but of the other English provinces vigorously remonstrated, first, because they had spent large sums of their own money on the war, and now felt quite able to protect themselves; and secondly and chiefly, because they considered that it was a direct violation of the constitution for Parliament to tax loyal English subjects without their consent. But neither the prime minister nor the king believed that the colonists had any rightful voice in the matter. The general theory then held by all European powers was that expressed by Lord Grenville, who said: "Colonies are only settlements made in distant parts of the world for the improvement of trade." Spain did pretty much as she pleased with her American provinces; France had done likewise; why, then, should England be expected to grant privileges which no other nation would allow? Nor was this policy purely monarchical. The Republican Parliaments of Cromwell were the first to put restrictions on colonial commerce. In order that they might cripple the Dutch carrying-trade, and benefit their own, they practically prohibited the colonists from shipping tobacco or other produce in any but English vessels. Under Charles II. this law was reënacted in more stringent form by the same Parliament that forbade the use of meat to English

people on Wednesday in order to encourage the fish dealers! The truth is that trade was constantly interfered with at home by the law-makers of England, just as it still is in many countries to-day that consider themselves free and independent. As time went on and the American colonies increased in population, the English laws grew more and more restrictive, until finally the inhabitants were not permitted to export a hank of yarn, print a copy of the New Testament, or make an iron pot, lest they should thereby diminish the profits of the English manufacturers and exporters. In fact, so narrow and so suicidal was the policy of the home government toward America that the ministry generally seemed to think that the people here should spend their entire energies in laboring to build up the commercial prosperity of Great Britain. That was believed to be glory enough for those who had taken their lives in their hands and emigrated to the wild shores of New England or Virginia; and when a small grant of money was asked to build a college in the latter colony, on the plea that Virginians had souls as well as Englishmen, the attorney-general with profane emphasis bade his petitioners not to mind their souls, but to "go and raise tobacco!"

So long as the crown had confined its measures to restrictions on trade and manufactures, the colonies had been comparatively quiet; but, now that the Stamp Act was proposed, by which not only every deed, will, or other law-paper, but every pamphlet and newspaper even, was to be taxed with a government stamp costing from one cent up to several dollars, passive submission was no longer possible. It is true that the British minister gave the colonists the choice of submitting to a stamp duty or to some other tax if they preferred it; but that, as a witty Frenchman said, was like the man who called his turkeys together and thus addressed them:

"I have invited you to meet me to know with what sauce you would prefer to be eaten." "But we don't want to be eaten at all," replied the turkeys. "Ah," retorted the owner of the fowls, "now you're dodging the question." Franklin did his utmost to prevent the passage of the bill, but without effect; for, as he wrote, "We might as well have hindered the sun's setting." Believing that the time had not yet come for open resistance, he counseled obedience to the obnoxious law, and as Lord Grenville desired to enforce the act with as little friction as possible, Franklin, at his lordship's request, named a suitable person as stamp-officer for Pennsylvania. This proceeding was misunderstood in Philadelphia, and a caricature of that period published there represents Beëlzebub whispering in Franklin's ear: "Ben, you shall be my agent throughout my dominions"; while at one time Mrs. Franklin seems to have feared that a mob might attack her house. When Franklin heard of the refusal of the colonists to have anything to do with the stamps, or even to allow any one to offer them for sale, he realized the impossibility of enforcing the law and said, "I apprehend no taxes, laid there by Parliament here, will ever be collected, but such as must be stained with blood."

In fact, the colonists had already threatened the stamp-officers with death if they persisted in carrying out the law; and as the last one rode back into Hartford on his white horse, closely pursued by five hundred angry farmers armed with clubs, he had good reason for saying that he felt like Death on a pale horse with Destruction following hard after him.

It is possible that if the English Parliament had been better informed in regard to the true condition of the colonies they might never have passed the act which had created

such an uprising; but the London papers of that day were filled with absurd accounts of this country and of its resources. Franklin ridiculed these in an article in which he went to the opposite extreme of exaggeration. "The very tails of the American sheep," said he, "are so laden with wool, that each has a little car or waggon on four little wheels, to support it and keep it from trailing on the ground." As for silk, he declared that the Americans raised it in such quantities "that agents from the emperor of China were at Boston treating about an exchange of raw silk for wool." This, he added, is as certainly true as the account published in all the English papers of last week "that the inhabitants of Canada are making preparations for a cod and whale fishery 'this summer in the upper Lakes.' Ignorant people," he continues, "may object that the upper Lakes are fresh, and that cod and whales are salt-water fish; but let them know, sir, that cod, like other fish, when attacked by their enemies, fly into any water wherever they can be safest; that whales, when they have a mind to eat cod, pursue them wherever they fly; *and that the grand leap of the whale in the chase up the Falls of Niagara is esteemed by all who have seen it, as one of the finest spectacles in nature.*"

Owing to the resistance made to the enforcement of the Stamp Act, Parliament now began to discuss its repeal. Pitt was especially urgent that it should be expunged from the statute books. He declared that the Americans were the lawful sons of England; and that "they were entitled to the common right of representation, and could not be bound to pay taxes without their consent." Later, he added, "The gentleman tells us 'America is obstinate; America is almost in open rebellion'; *I rejoice that America has resisted.*" This was in the winter of 1766. A few weeks after Pitt had

thus spoken, Franklin was examined by the House of Commons in regard to the expediency of continuing the act in force. Many of the questions put to him were by friends of America, who had probably given him an idea of what he would be asked before he was summoned, so that he was not wholly unprepared. Still his answers are remarkable. They show that he understood that principle laid down by the ancient Greek philosopher, who defined the perfection of style to consist in "saying what ought to be said, saying only what ought to be said, and saying that as it ought to be said."

*Q.* What is your name, and place of abode?

*A.* Franklin, of Philadelphia.

*Q.* Do the Americans pay any considerable taxes among themselves?

*A.* Certainly; many, and very heavy taxes.

* * * * * * * * *

*Q.* Do you not think the people of America would submit to pay the stamp duty, if it was moderated?

*A.* No, never, unless compelled by force of arms.

* * * * * * * * *

*Q.* What was the temper of America toward Great Britain before the year 1763?

*A.* The best in the world. They submitted willingly to the government of the crown, and paid in their courts obedience to the acts of Parliament. Numerous as the people are in the several old provinces, they cost you nothing in forts, citadels, garrisons, or armies, to keep them in subjection. They were governed by this country at the expense only of a little pen, ink, and paper; they were led by a thread. They had not only a respect, but an affection for Great Britain,—for its laws, its customs and manners, and even a fondness

for its fashions,—that greatly increased the commerce. Natives of Britain were always treated with particular regard; to be an *Old-England man* was, of itself, a character of some respect, and gave a kind of rank among us.

*Q.* And what is their temper now?

*A.* Oh, very much altered.

* * * * * * * * *

*Q.* You say the colonies have always submitted to external taxes, and object to the right of Parliament only in laying internal taxes; now can you show that there is any kind of difference between the two taxes to the colony on which they may be laid?

*A.* I think the difference is very great. An *external* tax is a duty laid on commodities imported; that duty is added to the first cost and other charges on the commodity, and, when it is offered for sale, makes a part of the price. But an *internal* tax is forced from the people without their consent, if not laid by their own representatives. The Stamp Act says we shall have no commerce, make no exchange of property with each other, neither purchase, nor grant, nor recover debts; we shall neither marry nor make our wills, unless we pay such and such sums; and thus it is intended to extort our money from us or ruin us by the consequences of refusing to pay it.

*Q.* But supposing the external tax or duty to be laid on the necessaries of life, imported into your colony, will not that be the same thing in its effects as an internal tax?

*A.* I do not know a single article imported into the northern colonies, but what they can either do without, or make themselves.

*Q.* Don't you think cloth from England absolutely necessary to them?

*A.* No, by no means absolutely necessary; with industry and good management, they may very well supply themselves with all they want.

*Q.* Will it not take a long time to establish that manufacture among them; and must they not in the mean while suffer greatly?

*A.* I think not. They have made a surprising progress already. And I am of opinion, that before their old clothes are worn out, they will have new ones of their own making.

*Q.* Can they possibly find wool enough in North America?

*A.* They have taken steps to increase the wool. They entered into general combinations to eat no more lamb; and very few lambs were killed last year. This course, persisted in, will soon make a prodigious difference in the quantity of wool. And the establishing of great manufactories, like those in the clothing towns here, is not necessary, as it is where the business is to be carried on for the purposes of trade. The people will all spin and work for themselves in their own houses.

* * * * * * * * *

*Q.* If the Stamp Act should be repealed, would it induce the assemblies of America to acknowledge the right of Parliament to tax them, and would they erase their resolutions?

*A.* No, never.

*Q.* Are there no means of obliging them to erase those resolutions?

*A.* None that I know of; they will never do it unless compelled by force of arms.

*Q.* Is there a power on earth that can force them to erase them?

*A.* No power, how great soever, can force men to change their opinions.

* * * * * * * * *

*Q.* What used to be the pride of the Americans?

*A.* To indulge in the fashions and manufactures of Great Britain.

*Q.* What is now their pride?

*A.* To wear their old clothes over again, till they can make new ones.

*Withdrew.*

After such an examination well might George III. warn his ministers against "that crafty American who is more than a match for you all." Shortly after this, Parliament repealed the Stamp Act; but, notwithstanding Pitt's determined opposition, they accompanied this repeal by a new act declaring the absolute right of the English government to impose taxes on the colonies whenever they might find it expedient. But the colonies did not believe that Parliament had any intention of enforcing this last act, and the rejoicing over the repeal was universal. Pitt got all the credit of it; and while the citizens of New York voted to erect his statue, many of the citizens of London, who were in sympathy with the colonists, illuminated their houses and built bonfires in honor of the man who was a friend both to Franklin and to America.

Franklin wrote to his wife in high spirits, saying: "As the Stamp Act is at length repealed, I am willing you should have a new gown, which you may suppose I did not send sooner, as I knew you would not like to be finer than your neighbors, unless in a gown of your own spinning. Had the trade between the two countries totally ceased, it was a comfort to me to recollect that I had once been clothed from head to foot in woolen and linen of my wife's manufacture, that I never was prouder of any dress in my life, and that she and her daughter might do it again if it was necessary." The

people of Philadelphia indulged in the wildest demonstrations of delight over the good news; punch flowed freely, barrels of beer were set running for the crowd, and amid loud hurrahs the health was drunk of "Our worthy and faithful agent, Dr. Franklin."

Franklin was by nature, as well as by principle, a worker, but his good sense had early taught him the truth of the saying that "All work and no play makes Jack a dull boy"; and so in the autumn of 1767 he took a pleasure trip to France, writing home to his wife as follows:—

"Traveling is one way of lengthening life, at least in appearance. It is but about a fortnight since we left London, but the variety of scenes we have gone through makes it seem equal to six months living in one place. Perhaps I have suffered a greater change, too, in my own person, than I could have done in six years at home. I had not been here six days before my tailor and hairdresser had transformed me into a Frenchman. Only think what a figure I make in a little bag-wig and with naked ears! They told me I was become twenty years younger, and looked very gallant."

On his return to England, Franklin wrote an article for the London *Chronicle*, on the "Causes of the American Discontents before 1768," in which he took for his text the significant words of an old proverb: "The waves never rise but when the winds blow." During Franklin's absence from America, John Dickinson, his political opponent, who had abused him in debate and done his utmost to prevent his appointment as agent of the colony, published a remarkable series of letters known as "The Farmer's Letters." They sharply criticised the policy of Great Britain respecting the trade of the colonies. Franklin read them while in London, saw their excellence, and immediately had them republished

there with a highly commendatory preface by himself. This unexpected return of good for evil was too much for his old enemy, and from that time Franklin probably had no sincerer friend than John Dickinson, who was in truth both an able and an honest man.

Not very long after this, Franklin was appointed agent for New Jersey, and also for Massachusetts, but Lord Hillsborough, Secretary for America, refused to recognize him in his new capacity, and treated him with great rudeness. As it was evident that the British government had no intention of removing any of the oppressive regulations respecting America, Franklin published in 1773 his "Rules for reducing a Great Empire to a Small One." His advice, which was addressed to all political ministers, but which had especial reference to "the late minister," Lord Hillsborough, began as follows:—

"In the first place, gentlemen, you are to consider that a great empire, like a great cake, is most easily diminished at the edges. Turn your attention, therefore, first to your *remotest* provinces, that as you get rid of them, the next may follow in order."

He then goes on to give ironical rules for governing the colonies by severer laws and depriving them of the common rights enjoyed by British citizens at home. By so doing they will gradually weaken the ties which hold the colonies to the mother country. In doing this, they will "act like a wise gingerbread baker, who, to facilitate a division, cuts his dough half through in those places where, when baked, he would have it broken to pieces."

Franklin next says that by imposing burdensome taxes, treating the colonies as though they were always inclined to revolt, sending them tyrannical governors and the like, they

will increase the discontent and ill-feeling till the conviction strengthens "that you are no longer fit to govern them." Finally, he adds: "Lastly invest the general of your army in the provinces with great and unconstitutional powers, and free him from the control of even your own civil governors . . . who knows . . . he may take it into his head to set up for himself? If he should, and you have carefully practiced the few excellent rules of mine, take my word for it, all the provinces will immediately join him, and you will that day . . . get rid of the trouble of governing them, and all the plagues attending their commerce and connection from thenceforth and forever."

The year before the publication of the famous "Rules" a number of letters, written by Governor Hutchinson of Massachusetts, and others, to a member of the English Parliament, fell into Franklin's hands. These letters related to public matters, and were calculated to do the colonies great harm by their misrepresentation of facts. Franklin sent the letters to the chairman of the Committee of Correspondence in Massachusetts with the request that he should show them to several prominent gentlemen, whom he named, and then return them to him. But in some inexplicable way the letters, contrary to Franklin's desire and without his knowledge or consent, got into print and were offered for sale both in America and in London. The excitement over them was great. Franklin at once came forward and publicly acknowledged that it was he who sent the letters to Massachusetts, thus taking all responsibility for the act upon himself. At a meeting of the privy council which he shortly after attended, he presented a petition for the removal of Hutchinson. In reply the solicitor-general attacked him in the most abusive manner, ridiculing his reputation as a man of letters by say-

ing with a sneer that it must be "a man of three letters," or in other words, a thief. Franklin submitted to the torrent of invective without a word. The petition he had offered was contemptuously rejected, and furthermore he was ejected from his office of postmaster-general. Thus did the ministry express their opinion of the American philosopher and statesman. Pitt, now Earl of Chatham, also took occasion to express his. He said that Franklin was "an honor not to the English nation only, but to human nature."

In the meantime affairs in America had been rapidly growing worse. After the repeal of the Stamp Act, Parliament had imposed taxes on various colonial imports, but as the Americans not only refused to purchase the taxed articles, but had begun to smuggle them from Holland on an extensive scale, the British government found that they were getting little, if any, revenue under the new law. Finally, all of the taxes were taken off except that on tea, which was retained, partly for the purpose of aiding the half-bankrupt East India Company of London, which then had an enormous stock of tea on hand, but chiefly to maintain the right of the crown to tax the colonies independent of their consent. The American people vowed that they would not buy the tea even at a greatly reduced price, and when several ships laden with it were sent to Boston in the winter of 1773, consigned to the son of that governor Hutchinson, about whose letters Franklin had had so much trouble, a body of citizens, disguised as Indians, emptied the hated herb into the harbor. The news of this act rendered the king furious. The port of Boston was ordered to be closed to all trade, and the charter of Massachusetts altered so that the government of the colony was taken out of the hands of the people and given to the officers of the crown.

The whole thirteen colonies now banded together to resist further oppression, and in 1774 the first Continental Congress met at Philadelphia; it drew up resolutions in which the colonists, who were still loyal subjects of Great Britain, claimed the right to tax and govern themselves. Congress also sent a petition to the king, humbly begging redress for their grievances. Franklin, in company with two other American agents, presented this petition; but nothing was accomplished by it, and the ministry continued to insist that the rebellious colonists should be taught to obey, if necessary, at the point of the bayonet.

The Earl of Chatham urged Parliament to adopt conciliatory measures. In a memorable speech made early in 1775, he said: "The spirit which now resists your taxation in America is the same which formerly opposed loans, benevolences, and ship-money in England; the same spirit which called all England on its legs, and by the Bill of Rights vindicated the English constitution; the same spirit which established the great fundamental, essential maxim of your liberties, *that no subject of England shall be taxed but by his own consent.*

"We shall be forced ultimately to retract; let us retract while we can, not when we must. I say we must necessarily undo these violent, oppressive acts; they must be repealed—you will repeal them . . . I stake my reputation on it—I will consent to be taken for an idiot, if they are not finally repealed.

"To conclude, my lords, if the ministers thus persevere in misadvising and misleading the king, I will not say that they can alienate the affections of his subjects from his crown; but I will affirm *that they will make the crown not worth his wearing.*"

Franklin remained in London some months later, hoping to bring about an amicable understanding between the government and the colonies. He even offered that the tea destroyed should be paid for, providing that the oppressive restrictions on the Americans should be removed; but finding at last that his efforts were useless, he set sail for Pennsylvania in the spring of 1775.

## FRANKLIN AND THE BEGINNING OF THE REVOLUTION, MAY 5, 1775, TO NOV. 21, 1776

While Franklin was on his way to America, the first blood of the Revolution had been shed at Lexington, and the farmers of Concord, gathered in defense of the military stores which the British went to destroy, had "fired the shot heard round the world."

Franklin wrote from Philadelphia to Edmund Burke, another good friend to the colonies: "Gen. Gage's troops made a most vigorous retreat —twenty miles in three hours—scarce to be paralleled in history; the feeble Americans, who pelted them all the way [*i.e.* from Concord to Boston] could scarce keep up with them."

Franklin had no sooner reached home than he was unanimously chosen a delegate to the second Continental Congress. He was appointed postmaster-general of the colonies, made a leading member of nearly every important congressional committee, and he helped to organize that army of which Washington not long after assumed the command. He was also appointed one of the commissioners who were sent to Canada to seek an alliance with the people of that province. Franklin, like Washington, still hoped that an honorable reconciliation might be effected with the British government;

but after the battle of Bunker Hill and the burning of Charlestown his views changed. He who had always maintained that "there never was a good war or a bad peace" now came to the conclusion that the colonies must fight for their liberties, saying that he was convinced of the truth of the proverb, "*If you make yourselves sheep, the wolves will eat you.*"

In accordance with this feeling he wrote to his old acquaintance Strahan, then a member of the House of Commons, the following letter:—

"PHILADA, July 5, 1775.

"MR. STRAHAN:—You are a member of Parliament, and one of that majority which has doomed my country to destruction. You have begun to burn our towns, and murder our people. Look upon your hands, they are stained with the blood of your relations! You and I were long friends; you are now my enemy, and I am

"Yours,

"B. FRANKLIN."

He also wrote to Dr. Joseph Priestley, the eminent scientist:—

"Tell our dear good friend, Dr. Price, who sometimes has his doubts and despondencies about our firmness, that America is determined and unanimous; a very few Tories . . . excepted, who will probably soon export themselves. Britain, at the expense of three millions, has killed one hundred and fifty Yankees this campaign, which is twenty thousand pounds a head; and at Bunker's Hill she gained a mile of ground, half of which she lost again by our taking post on Ploughed Hill. During the same time sixty thousand children have been born in America. From these *data* his mathematical head will easily calculate the time and expense necessary to kill us all, and conquer our whole territory."

The remarkable prediction which a French statesman, the Count de Vergennes, had made many years before, now came true. When, by the conquest of Canada, in 1763, the English had made themselves masters of the American continent, he said: "England will soon repent of having removed the only check that could keep her colonies in awe. They stand no longer in need of her protection. She will call on them to contribute towards supporting the burden they have helped to bring on her, *and they will answer by striking off all dependence.*" In 1776 it was felt that that time had come, and the colonies prepared to definitively separate from the mother country.

A committee of five, of whom Franklin was one, was chosen to prepare a declaration to that effect. They met, and Jefferson drew up the paper. It was presented to Congress, and after three days' debate, on July 4th, the United States of America *declared themselves independent!* When the members were about to sign the Declaration, —an act which under English law subjected them to the punishment of treason,— John Hancock of Massachusetts, who, we are told, had declared that he would put his name to it in such a fashion that the king of England could read it without spectacles, is reported to have said: "We must be unanimous; there must be no pulling different ways; we must all hang together." "Yes," replied Franklin, significantly, "we must, indeed, all hang together, or most assuredly we shall all hang separately."

Shortly after the Declaration of Independence, Lord Howe, with his brother, General Howe, attempted, at the request of the British Government, a negotiation of peace. Lord Howe also wrote to Franklin, expressing an earnest desire that a reconciliation between England and the colonies might be effected. In reply, Franklin said: "Long did I endeavor, with

COPY OF FRANKLIN'S LETTER TO STRAHAN

Reduced in Size

Philad.a July 5. 1775

Mr. Strahan,

You are a Member of Parliament, and one of that Majority which has doomed my Country to Destruction. —You have begun to burn our Towns, and murder our People. —Look upon your Hands! —They are stained with the Blood of your Relations! —You and I were long Friends: —You are now my Enemy, —and

I am,

Yours,

B Franklin

unfeigned and unwearied zeal, to preserve from breaking that fine and noble China vase, the British Empire; for I knew that, being once broken, the separate parts could not retain even their share of the strength or value that existed in the whole, and that a perfect reunion of those parts could scarce ever be hoped for." But the time for such negotiations had gone by, and though Franklin, in company with John Adams and Edward Rutledge, had a conference with Lord Howe at the latter's urgent request, yet it proved that his lordship had no power to do anything more than to grant the Americans pardon upon submission, which, of course, was not to be thought of for a moment. Lord Howe, who was really grateful to this country for the monument which Massachusetts had caused to be erected in Westminster Abbey to the memory of his elder brother, who had been killed in America during the French war, said at the conference that "he felt for America as for a brother, and if America should fail, he should feel and lament it like the loss of a brother." To which Franklin replied, with a bow and a smile, "My Lord, we will do our utmost endeavor to spare your lordship that mortification."

It is possible that Franklin assumed somewhat more cheerfulness than he really felt, for affairs looked far from promising for the cause of independence. Not only had the British defeated our troops in the battle of Long Island, but that disaster proved later to be but the prelude to still greater ones. Congress had long been considering the negotiation of a treaty with France, and that country was, of course, eager to give what help she could to aid us in our efforts to overcome the power of her old enemy, Great Britain.

Silas Deane, instructed by Franklin, was already in Paris on business relating to the proposed alliance; but he felt

the need of Franklin's presence. Jefferson was chosen to give his assistance, but not being able to go, Arthur Lee was unwisely appointed a substitute. Late in the autumn of 1776, Congress determined to send Franklin, then over seventy, to take charge of the French mission. He said, "I am old and good for nothing; but, as the storekeepers say of their remnants of cloth, 'I am but a fag-end; you may have me for what you please.'"

He at once began his preparations for the long and perilous voyage. It was at a season of the year when he must expect boisterous weather, and perhaps be cooped up for many weeks, battling with the elements. If he escaped their fury, he might fare worse, since it was by no means certain that he would not fall into the hands of a British man-of-war, and end his days in a prison or on the scaffold even.

## FRANKLIN'S MISSION TO FRANCE, 1776–1785

Franklin reached Paris late in December. Could he have known what was happening in America during his voyage, he would have found nothing to encourage him. After he sailed, Washington had been compelled to retreat across New Jersey, with the enemy in sharp pursuit. Congress had taken the alarm, and had abandoned Philadelphia for fear that they should all be made prisoners. It was the beginning of one of the gloomiest periods of the war. Well might Thomas Paine declare, "These are the times which try men's souls." The country was poor. Such money as was to be had was in paper, which kept steadily depreciating in value until at last it was worth less than two cents on the dollar. Even before Franklin left, powder had been at times so scarce that he seriously advised equipping men with bows and arrows. The

INDEPENDENCE HALL IN 1776

continental army was, in fact, miserably destitute. They needed not only arms and ammunition but food and clothing. Often during the terrible winter of '76 the men suffered terribly, and the course of their march might be traced by the bloody footprints of their shoeless, frost-bitten feet in the snow.

But in spite of poverty and disaster, Franklin had unbounded faith in the future of the new-born republic. He put all his ready money, some $15,000, into the cause of liberty, though it was very doubtful whether the loan would ever be paid back. When told bad news, he used to answer, "It will all come right in the end." Such confidence begot confidence in others, and the French people, who already knew the shrewd sayings of "Poor Richard" by heart, soon came to believe that a nation that had such a representative was indeed unconquerable. Franklin's picture was seen in all the print-shop windows of Paris. Storekeepers advertised Franklin hats, and the rich learned to warm their houses with the Franklin stove. At dinners and evening parties Franklin was besieged by importunate young men, who wanted to secure letters of introduction and recommendation to General Washington, and the ladies were full of enthusiasm for the American philosopher. But notwithstanding all this social success, the question of the treaty did not make much progress. The king hesitated, as well he might; for he knew that the ink of such a document would hardly have time to dry before England would declare war against him. He was ready to grant America secret aid, but he thought it prudent to wait and see how much strength the young republic really had before openly committing himself to her assistance.

The next year Howe captured Philadelphia and established his winter-quarters there, while Washington's troops were

freezing and starving in their miserable huts at Valley Forge. When the report of the British victory reached Paris, the friends of America were sorely disheartened, but Franklin said, when some one told him that General Howe had taken Philadelphia, "You are mistaken; Philadelphia has taken General Howe"; and so it proved, for after having been shut up there two-thirds of a year, the British were at last compelled to hastily evacuate the place which had been of no use to them.

Meanwhile Franklin was engaged in endeavoring to secure an exchange of prisoners, and thus release a large number of his countrymen from the filthy and horrible hulks and other places in which they were confined. Although the war dragged on, and at times even Washington seemed despondent, yet Franklin did not doubt that eventually a turn must come in our favor. He had proved by statistics that the population of the colonies was increasing at such a rapid rate that, as he calculated, it would double once every twenty-five years—an estimate which has thus far been confirmed by facts. He foresaw that eventually the majority of the English people would be found not in England, but in America. He thought that a country with such a future could afford to wait. The change in the tide of affairs was nearer, however, than he supposed. Late in the fall of 1777, right on the heels of the evil tidings of the fall of Philadelphia, came the news of Burgoyne's surrender to the Americans. The defeat of the British general had an immediate effect on the policy of the French government. Franklin lost no time in renewing his proposition, for a treaty or rather for two treaties: one political, by which France and America agreed to support each other in arms against Great Britain; the other commercial, which secured equal privi-

FRANKLIN ON THE STREETS OF PARIS

leges of trade to the contracting parties. The two treaties were signed at Paris on the 6th of February, 1778, and were at once sent by special messenger to America, where they were ratified by Congress. Under these treaties France agreed to send a fleet of sixteen men-of-war and four thousand men to assist the United States; and, although the French government was in an almost bankrupt condition, Franklin secured help to carry on the war, amounting in all to over five millions of dollars, of which nearly two millions was a free gift. With good reason might it be said that he and Washington were the two great powers who carried the Revolution through to a successful and final victory: the one by his military genius, the other by his diplomacy; one with the sword, the other with the purse.

Great Britain no sooner learned of the French treaty than she declared war against France, and even went so far as to ask the United States to join her in it! Lord North, the English prime minister, was so alarmed at the prospect that he hurried two bills through Parliament, offering to recognize Congress, give up all claims to the right of taxing the colonies, and grant them representation in Parliament. The Americans were no longer styled "rebels" but "his majesty's faithful subjects." Only let them come back, and their sins, like those of the prodigal son, should all be forgiven. But it is an old saying that revolutions never go backward, and the Americans having once declared themselves independent intended to remain so. Not satisfied with these efforts to obtain peace, England also made secret overtures to Franklin, but without effect.

Up to this period the United States had been too

poor to build a navy; but with the funds provided by France, Franklin was now able to buy and arm a number of privateers which did considerable execution. In 1779 he put Captain Paul Jones in command of a small fleet, one of which Jones named the "Bonhomme Richard" ("Poor Richard"), in honor of Franklin. With these vessels Captain Jones captured many British merchantmen. In the autumn of that year he encountered two English men-of-war, one of forty guns, the other of twenty-two, or sixty-two in all, to Jones's forty. After a terrible battle the larger of the two British frigates surrendered, and the second was captured by the help of the other privateers. From this time the English could no longer boast that Britannia ruled the waves.

While thus fighting the enemy Franklin managed to find leisure for both literary and scientific work. He read a paper before the Royal Academy of Sciences at Paris, on the Northern Lights, in which he advanced the theory that they are of electrical origin. He thus anticipated by many years the explanation which is now generally accepted by scientific men, just as he first discovered the warmth of that great ocean river the Gulf Stream, and found the true origin and course of northeast storms. He kept up a constant correspondence with a circle of French friends, and used to send them all sorts of witty and wise productions. One of these, addressed to Madame Brillon, was the story of the Whistle, which, like a well-worn coin, still passes current and will for generations to come.

He writes to her: "You love stories, and will excuse my telling one of myself.

"When I was a child of seven years old, my friends, on a holiday, filled my pockets with coppers. I went directly to a

THE FIGHT BETWEEN THE *BONHOMME RICHARD* AND THE *SERAPIS*

shop where they sold toys for children; and, being charmed with the sound of a *whistle* that I met by the way in the hands of another boy, I voluntarily offered and gave all my money for one. I then came home, and went whistling all over the house, much pleased with my *whistle,* but disturbing all the family. My brothers, and sisters, and cousins, understanding the bargain I had made, told me I had given four times as much for it as it was worth; put me in mind what good things I might have bought with the rest of the money; and laughed at me so much for my folly, that I cried with vexation; and the reflection gave me more chagrin than the *whistle* gave me pleasure.

"This however was afterwards of use to me, the impression continuing on my mind; so that often, when I was tempted to buy some unnecessary thing, I said to myself, *Don't give too much for the whistle*; and I saved my money.

"As I grew up, came into the world, and observed the actions of men, I thought I met with many, very many, who *gave too much for the whistle.*

"When I saw one too ambitious of court favor, sacrificing his time in attendance on levees, his repose, his liberty, his virtue, and perhaps his friends, to attain it, I have said to myself, *This man gives too much for his whistle.*

"When I saw another fond of popularity, constantly employing himself in political bustles, neglecting his own affairs, and ruining them by that neglect, *He pays, indeed,* said I, *too much for his whistle.*

"If I knew a miser, who gave up every kind of comfortable living, all the pleasure of doing good to others, all the esteem of his fellow-citizens, and the joys of benevolent friendship, for the sake of accumulating wealth, *Poor man,* said I, *you pay too much for your whistle.*

"When I met with a man of pleasure, sacrificing every laudable improvement of the mind, or of his fortune, to mere corporeal sensations, and ruining his health in their pursuit, *Mistaken man*, said I, *you are providing pain for yourself, instead of pleasure; you give too much for your whistle.*

"If I see one fond of appearance, or fine clothes, fine houses, fine furniture, fine equipages, all above his fortune, for which he contracts debts, and ends his career in a prison, *Alas!* say I, *he has paid dear, very dear, for his whistle.*

"When I see a beautiful, sweet-tempered girl married to an ill-natured brute of a husband, *What a pity*, say I, *that she should pay so much for a whistle!*

"In short, I conceive that great part of the miseries of mankind are brought upon them by the false estimates they have made of the value of things, and by their *giving too much for their whistles.*

"Yet I ought to have charity for these unhappy people, when I consider, that, with all this wisdom of which I am boasting, there are certain things in the world so tempting, for example, the apples of King John, which happily are not to be bought; for if they were put to sale by auction, I might very easily be led to ruin myself in the purchase, and find that I had once more *given too much for the whistle.*"

Franklin at this time suffered not only from the infirmities incidental to his age, which was now more than threescore and ten, but also from the gout, which, with another and more dangerous malady often tormented him with excruciating pain. His remedy was the mind-cure, though it was fun rather than faith on which he placed his chief reliance. To one of his friends, who had prescribed drugs, he sent the following dialogue:—

### Dialogue between Franklin and the Gout

Midnight, 22 *Oct.*, 1780.

Franklin. Eh! Oh! Eh! What have I done to merit these cruel sufferings?

Gout. Many things; you have eaten and drank too freely, and too much indulged those legs of yours in their indolence.

Franklin. Who is it that accuses me?

Gout. It is I, even I, the Gout.

Franklin. What! my enemy in person?

Gout. No, not your enemy.

Franklin. I repeat it; my enemy; for you would not only torment my body to death, but ruin my good name; you reproach me as a glutton and a tippler; now all the world, that knows me, will allow that I am neither the one nor the other.

Gout. The world may think as it pleases; it is always very complaisant to itself, and sometimes to its friends; but I very well know that the quantity of meat and drink proper for a man, who takes a reasonable degree of exercise, would be too much for another, who never takes any.

Franklin. I take—Eh! Oh!—as much exercise—Eh!—as I can, Madam Gout. You know my sedentary state, and on that account, it would seem, Madam Gout, as if you might spare me a little, seeing it is not altogether my own fault.

Gout. Not a jot; your rhetoric and your politeness are thrown away; your apology avails nothing. If your situation in life is a sedentary one, your amusements, your recreations, at least, should be active. Fie, then, Mr. Franklin! But amidst my instructions, I had almost forgot to administer my wholesome corrections; so take that twinge,—and that.

Franklin. Oh! Eh! Oh! Ohhh! As much instruction

as you please, Madam Gout, and as many reproaches; but pray, Madam, a truce to your corrections!

GOUT. No, Sir, no,—I will not abate a particle of what is so much for your good; therefore—

FRANKLIN. Your reasonings grow very tiresome.

GOUT. I stand corrected. I will be silent and continue my office; take that, and that.

FRANKLIN. Oh! Ohh! Talk on, I pray you!

GOUT. No, no; I have a good number of twinges for you to-night, and you may be sure of some more to-morrow.

FRANKLIN. What, with such a fever! I shall go distracted. Oh! Eh! Can no one bear it for me?

GOUT. Ask that of your horses; they have served you faithfully.

FRANKLIN. How can you so cruelly sport with my torments?

GOUT. Sport! I am very serious. I have here a list of offenses against your own health distinctly written, and can justify every stroke inflicted on you.

FRANKLIN. Read it then.

GOUT. It is too long a detail; but I will briefly mention some particulars.

FRANKLIN. Proceed. I am all attention. (*The Gout now names over a long list of offenses.*)

FRANKLIN. I am convinced now of the justness of Poor Richard's remark, that "Our debts and our sins are always greater than we think for."

GOUT. So it is. You philosophers are sages in your maxims, and fools in your conduct.

FRANKLIN. Ah! how tiresome you are!

GOUT. Well, then, to my office; it should not be forgotten that I am your physician. There!

FRANKLIN. Ohhh! what a terrible physician!

GOUT. How ungrateful you are to say so! Is it not I who, in the character of your physician, have saved you from the palsy, dropsy, and apoplexy? one or other of which would have done for you long ago, but for me.

FRANKLIN. Oh! Oh!—for Heaven's sake leave me; and I promise faithfully to take exercise daily, and live temperately.

GOUT. I know you too well. But I leave you with an assurance of visiting you again at a proper time and place; for my object is your good, and you are sensible now that I am your *real friend.*

While engaged in doing all in his power for the interest of the United States, Franklin also used his influence to secure the recognition of certain great principles of international intercourse which are now either fully admitted by most civilized countries, or promise soon to be. He pledged America to the policy of the protection of the merchant ships of neutral nations during war. He exposed the ruinous folly of the English laws which restricted the free importation of breadstuffs into Great Britain at a time when her people were suffering for want of food; and although he had helped to fit out privateers against her commerce, he was one of the first to endeavor to obtain the consent of the leading powers of Europe to the abolition of such methods of warfare.

But so far as America and England were concerned, an event was now at hand which was to make the work of Captain Paul Jones no longer necessary. On Sunday, Nov. 25, 1781, a special government messenger reached London with the intelligence that Lord Cornwallis had surrendered at Yorktown. When the prime minister, Lord North, was informed of this decisive defeat, he threw up his arms as if struck by a bullet, exclaiming, "O God! it is all over!"

Parliament was summoned at once to consider the crisis. The majority believed that further prosecution of the war would be useless. The king and his friends held out and would not hear of any cessation of hostilities, but at length they had to yield, and Lord North retired from office to be succeeded by Lord Rockingham, on the express condition that peace should be made. When the news was announced there were shouts of joy in the streets; many houses were illuminated, and the people cheered the members of the House of Commons who had voted against the king as "the saviours of their country."

It was now evident that the Revolution was practically over, but many delays occurred before a definitive treaty could be made between the United States and Great Britain. There were four chief questions to be settled, which involved not only England and America, but also France and Spain as parties to the agreement. These were: 1. The full and unequivocal recognition of the independence of the thirteen states as a nation; 2. The recognition of the Mississippi River as the western boundary of the States, of Canada as the northern, and of Florida as the southern; 3. The recognition of the right of the Americans to fish on the Banks of Newfoundland; 4. Compensation to the Loyalists in America for their loss of property. On the first point there was practically no very serious disagreement, but the commissioners appointed to negotiate the peace could not come to terms on the remaining three. England thought Maine should be included in her Canadian possessions. Spain objected to our holding all the territory as far west as the Mississippi, and both France and England were opposed either to our catching or to our curing fish on the shores of Newfoundland. In regard to making compensation to Loyalists (or Tories),

which England at first strongly insisted upon, Franklin was firm in his refusal. He said that it was like the man who heated a poker red-hot to run his neighbor through; the neighbor refused in the most emphatic way to allow the weapon to be thrust into him even so much as a single inch, and the man who had heated the poker then demanded that his neighbor should at least pay him for the time and fuel he had spent in getting the iron red-hot! This ridicule had its effect, and Great Britain said no more about Loyalist claims.

On the other points the debate went on for months. John Adams and John Jay, who, with Franklin, represented the United States, both doubted the good faith of France which, notwithstanding her friendliness during the war, they believed to be bent on cutting us off from all territory west of the Alleghanies, and even of depriving us of the navigation of the Mississippi. Jay was disgusted, and urged that the matter be postponed or dropped. "What," asked Franklin, "would you break off negotiations now?" "Yes," answered the resolute Jay, "just as I break the pipe I am smoking"; and with that he tossed it into the fire. But Franklin felt that it would be inexpedient to anger France at such a juncture. His politic management soothed all irritated feelings, and on Sept. 3, 1783, a final treaty of peace was signed and sealed between Great Britain and America. As the last commissioner affixed his signature to the important document, the United States took her place as a free and independent republic among the nations of the world. An anecdote is current in Paris in regard to the treaty which, whatever may be its claim to truth, has at least the merit of being a tribute to Franklin's ready wit. The story goes that, at a grand dinner given in honor of the successful arrangement of terms between the countries, the English ambassador drank the

health of King George III., whose power, said he, like that of the sun at midday, illumines the world. Next came the French minister, who responded in behalf of Louis XVI., whom he compared to the moon riding in splendor, and dissipating the shades of night. All eyes were now turned on Franklin. What was there left for him to say? The philosopher slowly rose, and, filling his glass to the brim, called on the company to join him in a toast to George Washington, President of the United States, Commander-in-Chief of the Army and Navy, who, like Joshua of old, commanded the sun and moon to stand still, *and they obeyed him!*

To the credit of England it should be said that the government finally accepted the situation without weak repining. When, a few years later, John Adams was presented to George III. as the first minister from the United States at the court of Great Britain, the king received him with much emotion, saying that though he had been the last to consent to a separation, he would now be the first to welcome the friendship of the United States as an independent power.

In the summer of 1785 Franklin turned his face toward home. He was then so feeble that he could not bear even the motion of a carriage, but was transported from Passy, the suburb of Paris, where he had resided for nine years, to Havre, a distance of upwards of one hundred and fifty miles, in the queen's litter, a kind of covered couch borne between two mules.

On the voyage he spent much of his time in writing some papers on "Improvement in Navigation" and on "Smoky Chimneys"; he also repeated his experiments in regard to the temperature of the Gulf Stream. He landed at Philadelphia on the 14th of September amid the ringing of bells and the firing of cannon in joy at his safe return.

## FRANKLIN AND THE CONSTITUTION, 1785-1787

Franklin had been at home but a few weeks when he was elected President of the State of Pennsylvania, the office being the same as that of governor in the other States. He was annually chosen for three successive years, that is, for the full time that, by the state constitution, the position could be held consecutively by one person. As he said, in a playful letter to a friend, "I had not firmness enough to resist the unanimous desire of my country folk; and I find myself harnessed again in their service for another year. They engrossed the prime of my life. They have eaten my flesh, and seem resolved now to pick my very bones." The entire salary which Franklin received as President, amounting in all to about $30,000, he regularly spent for some public and benevolent objects. In fact, during his whole life, though he had always been thrifty, he had never been selfish or mean. His motto was, "We should save in order that we may give." To that motto he was always true. When in England he once lent a considerable sum to a needy French gentleman, saying, "When you are able, lend the same amount to some one else who asks help, on condition that he shall do likewise; in this way the money will be kept in circulation, and so do much good."

Sparks says that "if the whole fifty years of his public life are taken together, it is believed that his receipts, in the form of compensation or salaries, did not defray his necessary expenses."

He was always ready with an encouraging word to those less fortunate than himself. When the times were hard and people despondent, he issued his "Consolation for America,"

declaring that farming and the fisheries were inexhaustible sources of wealth. "Every man," said he, "who puts a seed into the ground is recompensed forty-fold; every one that draws a fish out of the waters draws up a piece of silver."

But old and broken in bodily health as Franklin was, the country could not spare his services. He had been clerk of the Assembly, member of the legislature, delegate to the Colonial Congress, agent abroad for American interests for twenty-six years, signer of the Declaration of Independence, postmaster-general, member of Congress of the United States, minister at the court of France, commissioner to draft the treaty of peace, and governor of Pennsylvania. He thought now that his work was done. But no! his State had yet another request to make,—that he should act as delegate to the convention which was to meet in Philadelphia, May, 1787, to frame the Constitution of the Republic.

The need of a constitution had become imperative. When the country emerged from the Revolution, it was practically bankrupt. The long struggle for independence had made the union of the colonies a necessity, but the coming of peace relaxed the bond, and the confederation threatened to break up in anarchic confusion and civil war. The States had really no proper head. There was neither president nor supreme court. Congress consisted of a single house, which was conspicuous mainly, if not solely, for its weakness. It could enact laws, but could not enforce them; it could apportion taxes, but could not levy them; it could ask for soldiers, but could not draft them. In short, as an eminent statesman said, "Congress could declare everything, but could do nothing." The States were jealous of each other and jealous of the central government, though that government was a name rather than a fact. They quarreled about boundary lines;

they refused to pay debts; they denied each other freedom of trade; they had even begun to split up into independent and hostile fragments. Appalled by the discord, some conservative men despaired of the Republic, and wished to make Washington king. Washington himself beheld the wrangling with dismay. He said, "We are one nation to-day and thirteen to-morrow." He saw that the only hope lay in the action of the convention, which had been called to find a remedy for these evils. Franklin shared that feeling, and next to Washington, who presided over its deliberations, no delegate had greater influence than he. But the difficulties which the body had to overcome were no trifling ones. More than a month was spent in fruitless discussion, and the convention seemed to be as far from any agreement as when they first met.

At the end of that time Franklin thus addressed the presiding officer:—

"How has it happened, Sir, that we have not hitherto once thought of humbly applying to the Father of Lights to illuminate our understandings? In the beginning of the contest with Britain, when we were sensible of danger, we had daily prayers in this room for the divine protection. Our prayers, Sir, were heard; and they were graciously answered. All of us, who were engaged in the struggle, must have observed frequent instances of a superintending Providence in our favor. To that kind Providence we owe this happy opportunity of consulting in peace on the means of establishing our future national felicity. And have we now forgotten that powerful Friend or do we imagine we no longer need his assistance? I have lived, Sir, a long time; and the longer I live, the more convincing proofs I see of this truth *that* God *governs in the affairs of men.* And, if a sparrow cannot fall

to the ground without his notice, is it probable that an empire can rise without his aid?"

With the exception of a short recess, the convention sat during the entire summer, forging and testing each link of the new chain that was to bind all opposing individual interests into one solid and symmetrical union. Sometimes the little States held out and refused to agree to an article, at other times the great ones resisted; but at last a compromise was reached which practically satisfied them all. A copy of the Constitution was now printed and submitted to the convention for reconsideration and amendment. That consumed another month, and on Monday, September 17, the completed work was ready to be signed. Franklin had prepared the following speech for the occasion, but he was too feeble to deliver it, and it was read for him. He said:—

"Mr. President:

"I confess, that I do not entirely approve of this Constitution at present; but, Sir, I am not sure I shall never approve it; for, having lived long, I have experienced many instances of being obliged, by better information or fuller consideration, to change opinions even on important subjects, which I once thought right, but found to be otherwise. It is there fore that, the older I grow, the more apt I am to doubt my own judgment of others. Most men, indeed, as well as most sects in religion, think themselves in possession of all truth, and that wherever others differ from them, it is so far error. . . . But, though many private persons think almost as highly of their own infallibility as of that of their sect, few express it so naturally as a certain French lady, who, in a little dispute with her sister, said, 'But I meet with nobody but myself that is *always* in the right.'"

Still many hesitated to sign. Some thought the convention would have to break up without finishing their work. One member, says McMaster, "feared a civil war." Washington was the first to come forward to the table and affix his name to the Constitution. Then, one by one, the others did likewise. As the last were signing, Franklin, looking at the President's seat, back of which a sun was painted, said: "I have often and often in the course of the session . . . looked at that sun behind the President, without being able to tell whether it was rising or setting. But now, at length, I have the happiness to know that it is a *rising* and not a setting sun." Thus was formed that Constitution of government which, in the words of an eminent English historian, has for more than a hundred years secured to the people of the United States "a greater amount of combined peace and freedom than was ever before enjoyed by so large a portion of the earth's inhabitants."

## "THE LAST OF EARTH." 1787–APRIL 17, 1790

Franklin continued in public life for about a year longer, during which time he kept up his correspondence with his friends in England and France, as well as at home. To one of them he wrote in 1788, that he intended employing the remnant of his days in completing his autobiography, which he believed would be of especial "use to young readers, exemplifying strongly the effects of *prudent* and *imprudent conduct* in the commencement of a life of business."

To another, he wrote, the same year: "We have no philosophical news here at present, except that a boat moved by a steam-engine rows itself against tide in our river, and it is apprehended the construction may be so simplified and improved as to become generally useful." Franklin soon after

this withdrew from public affairs, though he continued to take an interest in both politics and science, and had the Philosophical Society meet at his house.

He often suffered long-continued pain, which unfitted him for any work, but consoled himself with the thought that "as we draw near the conclusion of life, nature furnishes us with more helps to wean us from it." He declared that the hardest cross old age imposed upon him was his loss of the friends he had outlived; that, said he, "is the tax we pay for long living; and it is indeed a heavy one." His last public act was to sign a memorial to Congress, praying for the abolition of slavery in the United States; and the last paper which he wrote, which was finished the day before his death, was on the same subject. Not long before this he rose and had his bed made, so that, as he said, "*he might die in a decent manner.*" On April 17th the end came. He left a will which began with these characteristic words: -

"I, BENJAMIN FRANKLIN, of Philadelphia, printer, late Minister Plenipotentiary from the United States of America to the Court of France, now President of the State of Pennsylvania, do make and declare my last will and testament, as follows."

In his will he says, "I was born in Boston, New England, and owe my first instructions in literature to the free grammar schools established there. I therefore give one hundred pounds sterling to my executors to be by them . . . paid over to the manager or directors of the free schools . . . to be . . . put out to interest . . . which interest, annually, shall be laid out in silver medals, and given as honorary rewards annually, . . . for the encouragement of scholarship in the said schools."

These medals are now distributed among the boys of the English High and Latin Schools of Boston at the yearly

examination. Among his private bequests the following is of interest. He says:—

"The King of France's picture, set with four hundred and eight diamonds, I give to my daughter, Sarah Bache, requesting, however, that she would not form any of those diamonds into ornaments, either for herself or daughters, and thereby introduce or countenance the expensive, vain, and useless fashion of wearing jewels in this country; and that those immediately connected with the picture may be preserved with the same."

Franklin further gave to "the town of Boston" and to the city of Philadelphia the sum of one thousand pounds sterling each, on condition that the money be loaned to young married artisans until at the end of a hundred years the principal should have increased to a hundred and thirty-one thousand pounds, when the greater part was to be laid out in improving each of the cities and the remainder again invested for another century for the same purpose.

The Franklin Fund of the city of Boston was allowed to accumulate to a large sum. It was then expended in laying out an extensive and very beautiful public park, named for Franklin. One of its great attractions is a Zoölogical Garden, popularly known as the "Zoo." The Philadelphia Fund was set aside to be used for the advantage of that city.

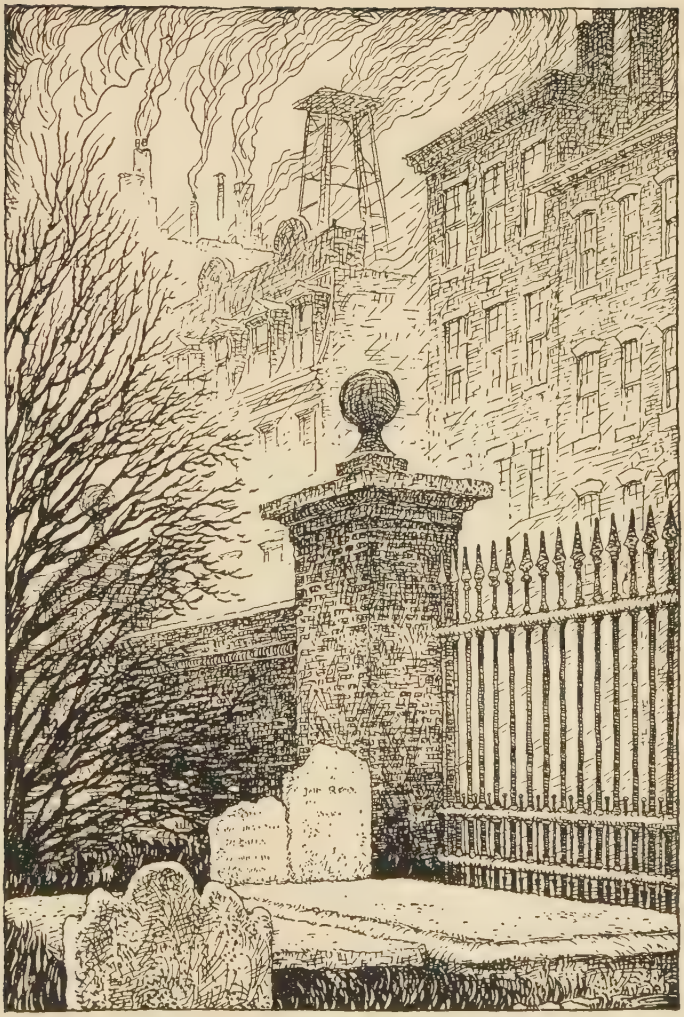
Thus Franklin is even now carrying out the resolution he had taken of being useful after his death—illustrating the truth of the Hindoo saying that "our works live on when we have passed away." Of the four greatest men that this country has produced he stands first in order of time—Franklin, Washington, Webster, Lincoln. Of those who have reached advanced age he was one of the few who could truthfully say that he "was willing to live his life over again." Did that

mean that his had been a perfect life? His confession of his "errata" answers that question. What it did mean was this —that on the whole, the spirit of his life was steadily tending onward and upward, so that though he stumbled as he ran yet he recovered himself, and, *in the end, won the race.*

At his funeral twenty thousand people gathered to take part, and when the news of his death reached France the National Assembly put on mourning for the man of whom Turgot had said, "He snatched the thunderbolt from the sky and the scepter from the hands of tyrants." He was buried in the graveyard of Christ Church, Philadelphia, by the side of his wife, who died while he was in England in 1774. The plain marble slab over the two graves bears, at his request, no other inscription than "Benjamin and Deborah Franklin, 1790."

More than sixty years before, when a printer in Philadelphia, he had written his own epitaph. Here it is:—

"The Body
of
BENJAMIN FRANKLIN,
Printer,
(Like the cover of an old book,
Its contents torn out,
And stript of its lettering and gilding,)
Lies here, food for worms.
But the work shall not be lost,
For it will (as he believed) appear once more
In a new and more elegant edition,
Revised and corrected
by
THE AUTHOR."



THE GRAVE OF FRANKLIN

# METHODS OF STUDY

## THE STUDY OF BIOGRAPHY

If you would profit by the experiences of others, there is no better or more interesting way than to learn from the lives of great men how they overcame their difficulties and made a place for themselves in the world. According to Carlyle, a good biography will tell you two things about the man, "what and how produced was the effect of society on him; what and how produced was his effect on society." If you know these you know the *real* man; you know what the advantages and difficulties of his life and times made of him, and what he, in turn, did for the world. As you read the *Autobiography* make a list of at least ten ways in which society affected Franklin, and of at least ten ways in which he affected society. Have you any of the same temptations? handicaps? advantages? talents? inheritance? desires?

In some ways good autobiography is the most interesting kind of biography because it is the man's own first-hand account of what he did and thought. It shows you, too, something of the history of his times as he himself saw it and lived it. Autobiography often gives homely details and the privately expressed opinions of prominent people which no ordinary history includes. Notice, as you read, any such details which are new to you. Make a list of them. Are any of them important?

Again, good autobiography will not only be well written in itself, but will necessarily reflect to some extent the literary qualities of the particular age in which the author lived. For instance, Franklin's prose attains greatness chiefly by reason of its clear-cut directness, its simplicity, and its sincerity. These are the characteristics not only of the literature of the period, but the distinctive marks of the thought of the times and, consequently, of all the great political documents of the colonial era. The finer elements of Franklin's style

are the same as those of the Constitution of the United States, of which Gladstone said, "The most wonderful work ever struck off at a given time by the brain and purpose of man."

Read at least one modern biography or autobiography while you are studying Franklin's: Bok's, Roosevelt's, Helen Keller's, Alice Freeman Palmer's, Mrs. Thomas Bailey Aldrich's, etc. Compare Franklin's *Autobiography* with the modern work which you read.

## THE VALUE OF THE STUDY OF FRANKLIN'S *AUTOBIOGRAPHY*

Franklin is a representative American citizen, next to Washington probably the foremost in one of the most trying epochs of the history of our country. Franklin possessed to a superlative degree the traits that we associate with the Yankee—inventive ability, shrewdness, and thrift. Therefore it is well for you to know his life and to realize in how many different ways the United States will forever be his debtor. Enumerate some of them.

Then too, "Franklin may be said, more fully than any other American writer, to reflect the typical mood of the eighteenth century as revealed in English literature—plainness, common sense, tolerance, and the practical virtue of honesty."[1] Give examples of these characteristics.

But perhaps the greatest value in studying Franklin's life is to be derived from appreciation of the fact that he was a man who had a consciously constructive program of living and of character development. Give details of Franklin's plan of living. How should you alter it?

## THE PLACE OF BIOGRAPHY IN LETTERS

Biography or autobiography more nearly resembles the biographical novel than any other literary form. Most students are already familiar with *Henry Esmond*, *Joseph Vance*, and *One of Ours*. Both biography and the biographical novel necessarily treat not with a section but with the whole span of a man's life. Notice what part of the

[1] Richardson and Owen, Literature of the World, p. 476. Ginn and Company, 1922.

life almost always receives most emphasis. Account for this fact. From the point of view of the reader's interest is this emphasis justified? Another characteristic common to both biography and the biographical novel is the place given to details. If you were writing a biographical novel with Franklin as the chief character, what details in the *Autobiography* should you include? A third similarity between biography and the biographical novel is that both are primarily character studies. What advantage does the novel have over biography in revealing a character? The obvious difference between the two forms is the absence or the inclusion of a plot. In a biography the final attainment of an early ambition persistently pursued often takes the place of a plot; sometimes simply a dominant characteristic of the man furnishes the chief unifying force. (See Bok's *A Man from Maine.*) What seem to you to be the unifying elements in Franklin's *Autobiography*?

## HISTORICAL BACKGROUND

It will help you to understand and enjoy the *Autobiography* if you refresh your memory on the chief facts of the Revolution (the Stamp Act, the Boston Tea Party, Lexington, Concord, Bunker Hill, etc.). Never forget, however, that Franklin the man is the central interest, not the history. Note that Franklin is the only man who signed all four of the documents so important to the United States at the time when this country became an independent nation: the Declaration of Independence, the treaty of alliance with France, the treaty of peace with England, and the Constitution. Find out all you can about one of these documents. In order to understand more fully the background against which Franklin's life was lived, make a list of his famous scientific and literary contemporaries. Find out all you can about one in each group.

# SPECIFIC QUESTIONS ON FRANKLIN'S *AUTOBIOGRAPHY*

## Pages 1–22

1. Could you find out as much about your ancestors as Franklin did about his? 2. What do you think of the principle of handing down a trade from father to son? 3. Write, if you can, a sketch of the town or city from which your ancestors came. 4. Have you read any of the books Franklin read as a boy? Discuss them. 5. Compare Franklin's method of learning to write with that of Stevenson. (See Stevenson's essay, "A College Magazine" in his collection *Memories and Portraits*.) 6. Look up the history of newspapers in the United States. 7. Do you think freedom of the press is a good thing? Would anyone today be arrested as Franklin's brother was? Give examples.

## Pages 22–57

1. Do you think Franklin was right in leaving home? Notice how sometimes the traits which later make a man great are those for which he is condemned when he is young. Give instances in other great men. 2. Have you been to Philadelphia? Describe your trip. Compare it with Franklin's. 3. Have you been to London? Tell the class your experience.

## Pages 57–72

1. Compare Franklin's start in business with that of young men you know. 2. What traits of Franklin successfully carried him through his early hardships in business? 3. Find out what you can about "bought" servants. Read again the account of Franklin as an apprentice, p. 12. 4. What useful purposes do clubs serve? Discuss the clubs to which famous men have belonged.

## Pages 72–111

1. Do you approve of all Franklin's business dealings? 2. Notice the different times that Franklin's ability to write was of service to him. What other men can you name who have attained high places in the literary world who were not literary men by profession? 3. What well-known men have been interested in founding or giving to public libraries since Franklin's time? How was the public library in your town founded? 4. What is your opinion about Franklin's not going to church? Should children be made to go to church? to school? to the dentist? 5. Discuss Franklin's unwillingness to marry the Godfreys' relative? 6. Discuss Franklin as a newspaper man; the founding of the *Saturday Evening Post*. 7. What would be your reaction on being asked to keep a chart such as Franklin kept? 8. Comment on the founding of the "United party for Virtue." 9. Read here and there in *Poor Richard's Almanac*. Make up some sayings dealing with thrift that might have been found in the *Almanac*. 10. "In the conduct of my newspaper, I carefully excluded all libeling and personal abuse, which is of late years become so disgraceful to our country." Do you think a newspaper conducted along these lines would prosper today? 11. Discuss Franklin's theory of learning modern languages before Latin. 12. What do you know about the practice today of inoculation for various diseases? What is the newest discovery along this line?

## Pages 111–146

1. What kind of fire protection has your town? your home? your school? 2. What do you think of the Quakers' attitude toward war? of Franklin's idea of being prepared? 3. How is the selling of lottery tickets regarded today? 4. Are you acquainted with the Franklin stove? If so, describe it for the class. Make a list of Franklin's scientific inventions. 5. What are the comparative merits of public and private schools? What kind of schools were there in Franklin's time? 6. What did Franklin accomplish in regard to electricity? What was known of electricity before Franklin's time? 7. Find out all you can about hospitals in America in the early days. 8. Read about the unsanitary conditions in the cities and towns of England and on the Continent before the streets were paved or lighted. Does

your town need improvement along this line? How will this improvement be brought about?

PAGES 146–176

1. Read in some history about the French and Indian wars. 2. Find out what you can about General Braddock; about the defeat at Fort Duquesne. 3. Read in some history about the Albany plan for union proposed by Franklin. Would the adoption of this plan have made unnecessary the Revolution? 4. Franklin as a military man.

PAGES 177–199

1. Describe some of your own electrical experiments. What is the newest discovery or invention in electricity of which you know? 2. What do you know about Pitt? What other prominent Englishmen were on the side of the Colonies? 3. What was Franklin trying to accomplish in England for the Colonies?

PAGES 200–228

1. What did Franklin's first mission to England accomplish? 2. What would you say about the white man's treatment of the Indian? How are the Indians treated today? Where do they live? 3. Discuss the rule of the proprietaries.

PAGES 228–252

1. Discuss the Second Continental Congress. 2. Why was France willing to sign treaties with the United States? What was the nature of the two treaties? 3. Give a character sketch of George Washington, John Adams, John Jay. 4. Why have many young republics used the Constitution as their model?

# QUESTIONS FROM THE COLLEGE ENTRANCE EXAMINATION BOARD WHICH MAY BE APPLIED TO THE AUTOBIOGRAPHY[1]

1. Lessons from Franklin's *Autobiography.* (150 words or more.)

2. A letter advising the reading of Franklin's *Autobiography.* (150 words or more.)

3. Lessons for the conduct of life to be derived from some biography or group of essays which you have read in preparation for this examination. (400 words.)

4. Show by specific illustrations from books that you have read how biographies and historical novels have increased your interest in history.

5. Do you prefer to read the biography of a real person or the life of an imaginary person in a novel? Choose an example of each, and tell why one interests you more than the other.

6. From the life of some person whose biography you have read, select an episode that seems to you particularly characteristic. Retell this episode and show wherein it is characteristic.

7. What to your mind are the advantages of autobiography as a means of portraying character?

[1] From examination questions copyrighted by the College Entrance Examination Board. Used by permission.

# NOTES

**Page 1.** *Twyford:* a small village near Winchester, Hampshire, in the south of England. Here Reverend Dr. Jonathan Shipley, bishop of St. Asaph's, Wales, had his summer residence. In his house, which is still standing, the first part of the *Autobiography* was written. "The good bishop," as Franklin liked to call him, was not only the author's intimate friend, but he was one of the few prelates in the House of Lords who openly defended the cause of the American colonies against those tyrannical measures of the crown which ultimately caused the Revolution.

*Dear Son:* William Franklin, the last royal governor of New Jersey, and Dr. Franklin's only surviving son. During the Revolution he remained loyal to Great Britain, and eventually removed to that country, where he continued to reside until his death.

**Page 2.** *Sinister:* on the left hand, unlucky, disastrous.

**Page 3.** *Northamptonshire:* This county, the geographical heart of England, has for us a twofold interest. There, on the manor of Sulgrave, thirty miles from Ecton, Laurence Washington was residing in the early part of the seventeenth century. In 1657 John Washington, one of his descendants, emigrated to Virginia. He was the grandfather of George Washington. Twenty-five years later (1682) Josiah Franklin, the father of Benjamin Franklin, came to New England. Thus in the same English county, and within a few hours' ride of each other, the ancestors of the two most illustrious leaders of the Revolution had their origin.

*Franklin:* "Moreover, the same country is so filled and replenished with landed menne, that therein so small a thorpe [village] cannot be found wherein dweleth not a knight, an esquire, or such an householder, as is there commonly called a Franklin, enriched with great possessions."—Judge Fortescue's *Laws of England, 1412*

Later a franklin was simply a small landowner.

With regard to surnames it may be said that originally the English had but one name, as Edward, Harold, and the like; but after the

Norman Conquest it became customary for men to take a second name, suggested by some personal peculiarity, occupation, or condition in life. In this way Edward the franklin, or landowner, would become Edward Franklin.

*Freehold:* land held by free tenure, usually land which is practically owned by the tenant.

*Lord of the manor:* the proprietor of a manor. *Manor:* originally the estate of a lord or person of rank, as the manor of Ecton.

**Page 4.** *Ingenious:* having natural capacity, intellectual power or genius.

*Esquire:* here, a country gentleman.

*Scrivener:* a professional writer; one who draws contracts, deeds, etc.

*Old style:* the old method of reckoning time. The new style was adopted in England in 1752 by dropping an excess of eleven days from the year.

*Transmigration:* the passage of a soul, at death, into another body; for example, into that of a newborn child.

*Quarto volumes:* made of sheets folded so that each makes four leaves; hence a volume of that size.

*A specimen:* "ACROSTIC. [Verses on a name; see initial letters.] "Sent to Benjamin Franklin in New England, July 15th, 1710:

Be to thy parents an obedient son;
Each day let duty constantly be done;
Never give way to sloth, or lust, or pride,
If free you'd be from thousand ills beside;
Above all ills be sure avoid the shelf[1];
Man's danger lies in Satan, sin, and self.
In virtue, learning, wisdom, progress make;
Ne'er shrink at suffering for thy Saviour's sake.

Fraud and all falsehood in thy dealings flee,
Religious always in thy station be;
Adore the Maker of thy inward part,
Now's the accepted time, give him thy heart;
Keep a good conscience, 'tis a constant friend;
Like judge and witness this thy acts attend.
In heart with bended knee, alone, adore
None but the Three in One for evermore."

[1] Here, the pawnshop.

*This uncle:* "This uncle Benjamin died in Boston in 1728, leaving one son, Samuel, the only survivor of ten children. This son had an only child, who died in 1775, leaving four daughters. There are now no male descendants of Dr. Franklin's grandfather living who bear his name."—Bigelow's *Franklin*

**Page 5.** *In folio:* with each sheet folded once, so that it makes two leaves.

*In octavo:* with each sheet folded so that it makes eight leaves.

*The Reformation:* The Reformation began in England in the reign of Henry VIII. Protestantism was established by his son, Edward VI. Queen Mary, his successor, endeavored to restore the Catholic religion, and prohibited the Protestant faith, which, however, was finally established by her successor, Queen Elizabeth.

*Joint-stool:* a stool made up of parts fitted into each other.

*Outed:* All the clergy (about 2000) who would not conform to the Church of England and use the prayer book were turned out of their pulpits.

*Conventicles:* meetings for worship, especially such as were held by those who had separated from the Church of England. The penalty for holding or attending a conventicle was imprisonment for the first and second offences, and seven years' transportation for the third. The jails throughout England were full of persons who had been arrested for the crime of thus worshiping God according to the dictates of conscience.

**Page 6.** *Born in Boston:* Franklin was born Sunday, January 6, 1706 (or January 17, new style). By the records of the Old South Church in Boston, to which his father and mother belonged, it appears that he was baptized the same day. At this time his father occupied a small wooden house on Milk Street, opposite the Old South Church, but he removed shortly afterward to a house at the southeast corner of Hanover and Union streets. Here he carried on the soap and candle business, hanging out a blue ball (to represent a cake of soap) as a sign.

*Sectaries:* members of a religious sect, especially of one that has separated from an established church, as the Church of England.

*Persecution:* The first settlers of the Colony of Massachusetts Bay were men who had not wholly separated from the Church of England, as the Pilgrims of Plymouth had done. Their object was to establish a religious commonwealth, governed in accordance with

their religious principles. For this reason they would not permit the Baptists, the Friends (Quakers), or any who differed from them in what they considered essential points of faith, to remain in their colony, though they did not oppose their going elsewhere and establishing colonies of their own. Thus the Baptists went to Rhode Island, and there founded a state granting entire liberty of worship to every settler; and the Friends established the colony of Pennsylvania, in which they also maintained that no one believing "in one Almighty God" was to be annoyed on account of his faith.

*Concluding lines:* The following are the preceding lines:

I am for peace and not for war,
And that's the reason why
I write more plain than some men do,
That use to daub[1] and lie.
But I shall cease, and set my name
To what I here insert,
Because to be a libeller
I hate it with my heart.

**Page 7.** *The grammar school:* the Latin Grammar School, which gave the name to School Street, Boston. It was a small wooden building standing very near where the Franklin statue is located.

*The tithe:* the tenth. "Of all that thou [God] shalt give me I will surely give the tenth unto thee."—Genesis xxviii, 22

*Character:* method of shorthand.

*Dipping mold:* Dipped candles are made by repeatedly dipping wicks in melted grease; cast candles, by pouring the hot grease into tin molds in which wicks have been placed.

**Page 8.** *Emmets:* ants.

**Page 10.** *At Boston:* in the old Granary Burial Ground (so called from the town granary which formerly stood where Park Street Church now stands), between the Tremont House and Park Street Church. The gravestone having become dilapidated, a number of citizens of Boston erected the present granite obelisk in 1827. It bears the name FRANKLIN in large bronze letters and a tablet with a copy of Dr. Franklin's original inscription.

*Ætat:* aged.

**Page 11.** *Braziers:* workers in brass.

[1] Flatter.

Page 12. *R. Burton's Historical Collections:* published in London between 1681 and 1736. It was said of the author: "He has melted down the best of our English Histories into Twelve-penny Books, which are filled with wonders, rarities, and curiosities." Dr. Samuel Johnson admired them, and said that "they seem very proper to allure backward readers."

*Chapmen's books:* small books, such as were sold by chapmen, or peddlers.

*Polemic:* controversial.

*Essay on Projects:* This was an early publication of De Foe, the well-known author of Robinson Crusoe. The "projects" were schemes for improved banks, insurance companies, asylums, roads, academies for the higher education of women, and the like. Not a few of Franklin's most useful projects seem to have been suggested by this book.

*Mather's . . . Essays to do Good:* a little volume written by Cotton Mather in expectation of the coming of the end of the world in 1716. Franklin picked out the few grains of wheat hidden in this bushel of chaff, and turned them to such excellent account that he was afterward able to write to Dr. Mather's son, "If I have been, as you seem to think, a useful citizen, the public owes all the advantage of it to that book."

*Letters:* type.

*In Boston:* James Franklin's printing-office was located at the eastern corner of Franklin Avenue and Court Street.

*Indentures:* so called because such contracts were drawn up on two sheets of paper, with indented edges, which matched. The master kept one copy, the apprentice the other, and the indentures at the top of each showed that they were duplicates.

Page 13. *Grub-street:* a street in London once famous as the residence of poor authors.

Page 14. *The Spectator:* a series of essays on a great variety of subjects, published daily in London, 1711–1712; revived, 1714. Addison was the chief contributor.

Page 17. *By Messrs. du Port Royal:* by the members of a noted society of learned men, who in the seventeenth century had their residence in the abbey of Port Royal, near Paris. Here they published many famous works.

*Socratic method:* Socrates argued by asking a series of questions, which gradually compelled his adversary to grant everything he wished.

**Page 19.** *The second:* This is an error; it was the fourth.

*The New England Courant:* Parton says it was "the first sensational newspaper established in New England."

**Page 20.** *Demeaned:* put down, debased. "I fancy his harsh and tyrannical treatment of me might be a means of impressing me with that aversion to arbitrary power that has stuck to me through my whole life."—Franklin

*Imprisoned:* This, says Sparks, was probably the first transaction, in the American colonies, relating to the freedom of the press; and it is not less remarkable for the assumption of power on the part of the legislature than for their disregard of the first principles and established forms of law. James Franklin's punishment, however, was nothing compared with the penalty inflicted for similar offenses in England.

**Page 21.** *The New England Courant:* The press on which Benjamin Franklin printed the *Courant* is preserved in the office of the Newport *Mercury*, Newport, R. I., that paper having been established at a later period by James Franklin.

**Page 22.** *Errata* (plural of *erratum*): errors or mistakes. It was probably at this time that the following significant advertisement appeared in the *Courant:* "James Franklin, printer in Queen [now Court] Street, wants a likely lad for an apprentice."

**Page 23.** *The Kill:* channel or creek, a Dutch word. Here, the narrow passage on the north and west of Staten Island. It is the inside route to Amboy, N. J.

*Shock pate:* short bushy hair.

**Page 24.** *Scuttle:* a square hole cut in the deck of a vessel and communicating with the hold. It is covered with a lid.

**Page 25.** *Itinerant:* strolling.

*Letters:* learning.

*Travesty:* to burlesque, parody.

**Page 26.** *Pot of ale:* a quart mug of ale.

*Dutch dollar:* a coin worth about one dollar.

*Shilling in copper:* twelve English pence, or twenty-four cents.

**Page 27.** *Three-penny loaf:* six-cent loaf (a penny being equal to two cents).

**Page 28.** *Billet:* a stick of wood.

*Composing-stick:* a small, adjustable metal frame, which is held in the compositor's left hand and in which he sets up type for printing.

**Page 29.** *Sophister:* here, deceiver, knave, "fox."

*Novice:* an inexperienced person.

*Font:* a complete set of type of one size or kind.

*Compose:* to set up in type.

*Copy:* the manuscript or original matter to be set up in type.

*One pair of cases:* a frame holding boxes of type.

*Dieted:* here, boarded.

**Page 30.** *Compositor:* a typesetter.

*French prophets:* Protestants of the south of France who, under the barbarous religious persecution of Louis XIV, were driven into the wildest fanaticism, fancying themselves gifted with the spirit of prophecy. Their mottoes were "no taxes" and "liberty of conscience."

**Page 31.** *Of promising parts:* of ability.

**Page 32.** *Both governments:* Pennsylvania and Delaware. The latter, then called Delaware Counties, was under the jurisdiction of the governor of Pennsylvania, but had a separate legislature. Colonel French was a man of much influence in the "counties."

**Page 33.** *Five pounds sterling:* about twenty-five dollars, which had a larger purchasing power than now.

*Raree-show:* a peep-show carried about in a box.

*Paper:* The trade of Massachusetts with England drained the colony of its coin and compelled the use of paper money. Notes as low as threepence were in circulation and were often so badly worn that they dropped to pieces.

*A piece of eight* (eight reals): a Spanish dollar, worth about one dollar.

*It was while on this visit:* All matter inclosed in brackets is additional, and not a part of the original autobiography.

**Page 35.** *Lampooning:* satirizing, ridiculing.

*Thirty-five pounds currency:* The pound sterling was worth about $5.00, and the colonial pound, or pound currency, about two thirds as much ($3.33); thirty-five pounds currency was therefore $116.55. See note on page 33.

**Page 37.** *Thwarts:* the rowers' seats, so called because placed athwart the boat.

**Page 39.** *The governor:* Governor Keith. In many ways Keith proved himself a man of excellent ability and one very helpful to the colonists; but he contracted debts which he was unable to pay, and these ultimately ruined him. He was the only governor of Pennsylvania, before the Revolution, who "espoused the cause of the common people."

*Annis:* Captain Annis, commander of the *London-Hope.*

**Page 40.** *Trepanned:* entrapped.

*Doubt:* here, am inclined to think, or suspect.

**Page 41.** *Eighteen pence sterling:* thirty-six cents.

**Page 42.** *Factor:* commission merchant.

**Page 44.** *Pope cured him:* In 1728 Alexander Pope published his *Dunciad*, a satirical poem on the critics and rimesters of that time. In a later edition he impaled James Ralph (then residing in London) with his pen in the following lines:

> Silence, ye wolves! while Ralph to Cynthia howls,
> And makes Night hideous—answer him, ye owls.
>
> Book III, line 165

*Prose writer:* In 1744 Ralph wrote a history of England which received high praise from eminent critics and for which George III granted him a pension.

**Page 45.** *Mr. Andrew Hamilton:* In the *American Weekly Mercury* of November 5, 1724, published at Philadelphia, was the following: "On Monday, the 2d of this Instant Andrew Hamilton Esq., our late Attorney General for this Province, set out from this Town, in order to Imbark on board Capt. Annis for London, and was Accompanyed so far as the Ferry, with some of the Chief of our Town, with about 70 Horse." Andrew Hamilton gave Philadelphia her first state house, now known as Independence Hall.

**Page 47.** *To be bound:* to give bonds, or to become responsible for the payment of a note.

*The proprietaries:* In 1681 Charles II granted to William Penn, the most influential member of the Religious Society of Friends (Quakers) a tract of land in America, which the king named Pennsylvania, "Penn's forest country." By the terms of this grant Penn

was created proprietary, or proprietor, and governor. In accordance with the provisions of the royal charter, the proprietary had the power to appoint a deputy governor to act for him in his absence. This deputy received his salary from the assembly, or legislature, elected by the inhabitants of the colony. All laws were made by the assembly and deputy governor, but it was necessary that they should be accepted by the king.

After William Penn's death, his sons became proprietaries and governors. They usually resided in England, had little if any sympathy with the Society of Friends, and were interested in Pennsylvania only so far as their possessions there enabled them to gratify their greed for money and power.

Keith, the deputy governor, occupied no enviable position. He had two masters, the proprietaries who appointed him, and the assembly that paid him. As the two seldom agreed, the unfortunate deputy was in constant anxiety. If he offended the proprietaries, he lost his office; if the assembly, he lost his salary. Between the two he lived in almost perpetual broils, tormented with the constant uncertainty whether he should be able to live at all.

*Little Britain:* a street not very far from St. Paul's, once famous for its old booksellers.

*Three shillings and sixpence:* about eighty-four cents.

**Page 48.** *Fifteen pistoles:* The pistole is an old gold coin worth about $4.00.

*Wilkes:* a noted comedian.

*Hackney writer:* one who does literary drudgery for hire.

*The Temple:* a famous law college and residence for lawyers in London.

*Bartholomew Close:* the enclosed space, reached by a narrow passage, containing the church of St. Bartholomew.

*Metaphysical:* relating to mental science.

**Page 49.** *Asbestos:* a fibrous mineral, resembling both stone and wood. It is incombustible, and is now used for fire-proof cloth, as packing for fire-proof safes, and for a variety of other purposes.

*Sir Hans Sloane:* a distinguished man of science. His collection of curiosities was purchased by the English government and became the nucleus of the British Museum.

*Heard of it:* Young Franklin had written Sir Hans Sloane as follows:

LONDON, 2d June, 1725.

SIR,—Having lately been in the northern parts of America, I have brought from thence a purse made of the *asbestos;* a piece of the stone, and a piece of the wood, the pithy part of which is of the same nature, and called by the inhabitants *salamander cotton.* As you are noted to be a lover of curiosities, I have informed you of these; and if you have any inclination to purchase or see them, let me know your pleasure by a line for me at the Golden Fan, Little Britain, and I will wait upon you with them. I am, sir, your most humble servant,

B. FRANKLIN.

P.S. I expect to be out of town in two or three days, and therefore beg an immediate answer.

**Page 50.** *Sixpence:* twelve cents.

*Epic poem:* a long narrative poem celebrating the achievements of some more or less national hero, as the Iliad does the exploits of Achilles.

*One of Young's Satires . . . them:*

> Ye restless men! who pant for letter'd praise,
> With whom would you consult to gain the bays[1]?
> With those great authors whose fam'd works you read?
> 'Tis well; go, then, consult the laurel'd shade,
> What answer will the laurel'd shade return?
> Hear it and tremble, he commands you burn
> The noblest works, his envy'd genius writ,
> That boasts of naught more excellent than wit.
> If this be true, as 'tis a truth most dread,
> Woe to the page which has not that to plead!
> Fontaine and Chaucer, dying, wish'd unwrote
> The sprightliest efforts of their wanton thought:
> Sidney and Waller, brightest sons of fame,
> Condemn'd the charm of ages to the flame.

**Page 51.** *Press:* The press on which Franklin worked while at Watts's was purchased by an American and is now in the Patent Office at Washington.

[1] Honorary garlands or crowns.

*Form:* type arranged for printing and secured in an iron frame.

*Four or five shillings:* a dollar or dollar and a quarter.

*Composing-room:* the room where compositors set up type.

*Excommunicate:* a person ejected or cut off from religious communion; here, one that is boycotted.

**Page 52.** *Sorts:* here, letters or type.

*Matter:* a column of type set up.

*Chapel:* In England a printing-office was formerly called a chapel, probably because Caxton, the first English printer, set up his press about 1474 within the precincts of Westminster Abbey, in a building said by tradition to have been an ancient chapel.

*Pay the money:* In London a new workman was expected to pay a certain amount of money to be spent in beer for the good of the chapel.

*Porringer:* a porridge basin.

*Three halfpence:* three cents.

*Light:* credit.

*Thirty shillings:* about $7.20.

*St. Monday:* a Monday holiday observed by lazy workmen.

**Page 53.** *Italian warehouse:* a shop where olives, salad oil, etc., are sold.

*Anchovy:* a fish of rich and peculiar flavor. It is about the size of a man's middle finger.

*Two shillings:* forty-eight cents.

*One shilling and sixpence:* thirty-six cents.

**Page 54.** *Twelve pounds:* about $60.

*Saint Veronica:* According to tradition, a Jewish maiden, meeting Christ on his way to Calvary, gave him her handkerchief out of pity. He wiped his bleeding face with it and returned it. Ever after the handkerchief bore a perfect likeness of the Saviour; hence the name *Veronica*, "the true likeness."

*The College:* Probably Chelsea Hospital is meant.

*Don Saltero's curiosities:* Don Saltero had been a servant of Sir Hans Sloane, who had given him many curiosities from his famous collection. The don opened a coffee-house at Chelsea, of which he said:

> Monsters of all sorts here are seen,
> Strange things in nature as they grew so;
> Some relics of the Sheba queen,
> And fragments of the famed Bob Crusoe.

**Page 55.** *Chelsea to Blackfriars':* a distance, following the course of the Thames, of about three miles.

*This exercise:* Franklin continued to practice swimming even after he had reached an advanced age. Writing in his private journal in 1785 he says: "I went at noon to bathe . . . and, floating on my back, fell asleep, and slept near an hour by my watch, without sinking or turning! A thing I never did before, and should hardly have thought possible. *Water is the easiest bed that can be.*"

*Thévenot* (tā'v'-nō'): author of a work on the art of swimming.

*Composition:* settlement.

**Page 56.** *Fifty pounds . . . Pennsylvania money:* about $167.

*Gratify:* here, recompense.

**Page 57.** *Plan:* The "plan" referred to has never been found.

*So young:* Franklin was then under twenty-one.

**Page 59.** *Nuncupative will:* a will given by word of mouth.

*Purchased:* It was not uncommon for emigrants destitute of means to sell their services for a term of years to the captain of a ship to repay the cost of their passage to America.

**Page 60.** *Articled:* bound by articles of apprenticeship; indentured.

*Fifteen guineas:* guinea, originally an English gold coin, worth about $5.25; hence about $78.75.

*Gown:* Oxford students are required to wear gowns.

*Furze:* a thorny evergreen bearing beautiful yellow flowers; the gorse.

*Crimp's bill:* The crimps were unscrupulous men who had offices in the English seaport towns and decoyed men into emigrating or going to sea. They distributed flaming advertisements to catch their victims, who, if emigrants, were bound to the captain for a term of years.

**Page 61.** *Sabbath:* Keimer, it will be remembered, professed to observe the Old Testament, or Jewish, doctrines.

*Puncheons:* punches.

*Matrices* (plural of *matrix*): molds for casting type.

*Warehouseman:* here, clerk, or salesman, in the stationery shop.

*Factotum:* one who makes himself generally useful; a "do-all."

**Page 62.** *Captious:* irritable, touchy.

**Page 63.** *Inventory:* here, a list of the stock to be purchased.

*Copper-plate press:* The bills were printed from designs engraved on copper-plate and required a special kind of press.

*Checks:* Figures by which a banknote is identified or registered in order to guard against counterfeits.

**Page 64.** *Chain:* an instrument made of links like a chain and used for measuring land.

**Page 65.** *Dissenting way:* Those who separated from the Church of England and established a different worship were called Dissenters.

*Deism:* Deism acknowledges the existence of God, but denies revealed religion.

*Lines of Dryden:* This varies considerably from the original. See Dryden's *Œdipus*, III. 1. Franklin probably quoted from memory.

*Purblind:* here, dim or near-sighted.

*Clever:* skillful.

**Page 66.** *Twenty-four pounds:* if in Pennsylvania currency, about $80.

**Page 67.** *Seventy:* if in Pennsylvania currency, about $233.

*Crown:* an English coin worth five shillings, or $1.20.

**Page 68.** *Junto:* here, meeting or society. It is not unlikely that the idea of the Junto was first suggested to Franklin by Cotton Mather's scheme for establishing "reforming societies" described in his "Essays to do Good."

**Page 70.** *Quadrant:* an instrument used in astronomy, navigation, and surveying. Godfrey did not invent the quadrant, but made an improved instrument, for which the Royal Society of London sent him £200 ($1000) worth of household furniture—his habits of intemperance preventing their sending him money.

**Page 71.** *Pica:* a kind of type; e. g. these words are in small pica.

*Long primer:* a kind of type, smaller than small pica; e. g. these words are in long primer.

*Imposed:* placed the type, which had been set up, in order for printing.

*Pi:* a mass of type mixed confusedly.

*Distributed:* separated the types and put them back in the case, in their respective compartments.

**Page 73.** *His paper:* This paper was called *The Universal Instructor in all Arts and Sciences, and Pennsylvania Gazette.* When

Franklin began to issue it, on October 2, 1729, he dropped all the first part of the title and called it *The Pennsylvania Gazette.*

*Dispute:* This was in regard to the governor's salary. He brought instructions from England to the effect that his salary should be £1000 ($5000), but the legislature insisted on their right to fix it themselves. Franklin approved their spirit, and said to the Assembly, at the close of his article: "Their happy mother country will perhaps observe, with pleasure, that though her gallant cocks and matchless dogs abate their natural fire and intrepidity when transported to a foreign clime (as this nation is), yet her sons in the remotest part of the earth, and even to the third and fourth descent, still retain that ardent spirit of liberty, and that undaunted courage, which has in every age so gloriously distinguished Britons and Englishmen from the rest of mankind."

**Page 74.** *Mr. Hamilton:* "I got his son once £500."—Marginal note by Franklin

*Anecdote:* This anecdote, though not included in Franklin's *Autobiography*, seems to deserve a place here since it illustrates a characteristic feature of the man. It will be found in Sparks's edition of Franklin's works.

*Ingenuous:* candid.

**Page 75.** *One hundred pounds currency:* about $333.

*Bail:* here, security.

**Page 76.** *Thirty pounds:* if currency, about $100.

**Page 77.** *Fifteen thousand pounds* (currency): a little over $50,000.

**Page 78.** *Pounds:* In all the above cases the pound should not be called more than two thirds of a pound sterling, or about $3.33.

*That government:* that of "Delaware Counties."

*Blanks:* blank forms for deeds, contracts, receipts, etc.

*Snug:* private.

**Page 80.** *Riders:* the mail was then generally carried on horseback.

**Page 81.** *Overtures:* proposals, offers.

*The match:* that is, Miss Read's marriage with Rogers.

*Inval'id:* of no force, null.

**Page 83.** *A subscription library:* the first circulating library established in America.

*Forty shillings:* if currency, about $6.66.

*Ten shillings:* if currency, about $1.66.

*In defence of their privileges:* Thus far was written with the intention expressed in the beginning and therefore contains several little family anecdotes of no importance to others. What follows was written many years after in compliance with the advice contained in these letters, and accordingly intended for the public. The affairs of the Revolution occasioned the interruption.—Franklin

*On this little fund:* Continuation of the account of my life, begun at Passy, near Paris, 1784.—Franklin

**Page 84.** *The company:* This library was founded in 1731, and incorporated in 1742. By the addition made to it of the library left by Mr. James Logan, and by annual purchases, the Philadelphia Library now numbers over 150,000 volumes.—Bigelow's *Franklin*

**Page 85.** *Three-and-twenty shillings:* if in currency, about $3.82.

**Page 87.** *Explications:* explanations.

*Went no more to the public assemblies:* Later in life Franklin earnestly inculcated attendance at church, writing to his daughter Sarah, in 1764: "Go constantly to church, whoever preaches. The act of devotion in the common prayer-book is your principal business there, and, if properly attended to, will do more towards amending the heart than sermons generally can do. For they were composed by men of much greater piety and wisdom than our common composers of sermons can pretend to be; and therefore I wish you would never miss the prayer days; yet I do not mean you should despise sermons even of the preachers you dislike, for the discourse is often much better than the man, as sweet and clear waters come through very dirty earth. I am the more particular on this head as you seemed to express a little before I came away, some inclination to leave our church, which I would not have you do."

**Page 90.** *Pythagoras:* a Greek philosopher, 600 B.C.; he required his disciples to consider daily certain moral precepts. The time which he recommends for this work is about even or bed-time, that we may conclude the action of the day with the judgment of conscience, making the examination of our conversation an evening song to God. Wherein have I transgressed? What have I done? What duty have I omitted? So shall we measure our lives by the rules above mentioned, if to the law of the mind we join the judgment of reason.—Bigelow's *Franklin*

**Page 92.** *O vitæ . . . anteponendus:* "O philosophy, thou guide of life! O thou searcher after virtue and banisher of vice! One day spent virtuously, and in obedience to thy precepts, is worth an immortality of sin."—*Tusculanæ Disputationes*, V, 2, 5

**Page 97.** *The Art of Virtue:* Nothing so likely to make a man's fortune as virtue.—Marginal note by Franklin

**Page 99.** *My humility:* Thus far written at Passy, 1784.

**Page 100.** *Having mentioned . . . project:* "I am now about to write at home [Philadelphia], August, 1788, but cannot have the help expected from my papers, many of them being lost in the war [the American Revolution]. I have, however, found the following" (referring to the above).

**Page 104.** *Broadside:* a sheet of paper printed on one side only.

**Page 106.** *Extempore:* without preparation, off-hand.

*Heterodoxy:* heresy.

*Synod:* a meeting of clergymen to discuss matters of religion.

*Pro and con:* for and against.

**Page 110.** *Inoculation:* was the practice of introducing the smallpox virus into the arm with the view of inducing a mild form of the disease. Lady Mary Montagu originated this method in England about 1721. Thence it was brought to America. Vaccination was introduced about 1796. Both methods of treatment were for many years vehemently opposed by most physicians and clergymen as not only dangerous, but sinful.

**Page 112.** *Offered it to me:* The following advertisement appeared in *The Pennsylvania Gazette* of October 27, 1737:

> Notice is hereby given, that the postoffice of Philadelphia is now kept at B. Franklin's, in Market Street; and that Henry Pratt is appointed Riding Postmaster for all the stages beween Philadelphia and Newport in Virginia, who sets out about the beginning of each month, and returns in twenty-four days; by whom gentlemen, merchants, and others, may have their letters carefully conveyed, and business faithfully transacted, he having given good security for the same to the Honorable Colonel Spotswood, Postmaster-General of all his Majesty's Dominions in America.

**Page 113.** *Watch:* police.

*Six shillings:* if currency, about $1.

*Fifty pounds:* if currency, less than $167.

**Page 115.** *Whitefield:* He was of English birth, and at an early

age became associated with John and Charles Wesley, the founders of Methodism, though he differed from them in doctrine.

*Westminster Hall:* in London.

**Page 116.** *Mufti:* the high-priest of the Mohammedans.

*Out of the jails:* General Oglethorpe founded the colony of Georgia, in 1732, partly for the benefit of the unfortunate debtors who, owing to the harsh and unjust laws, were rotting in the prisons of England,—often through no fault of their own,—and partly as an asylum for the oppressed Protestants of Germany and other European states.

**Page 117.** *To his death:* Whitefield died in 1770 at Newburyport, Massachusetts, and was buried in a vault under the pulpit of the Old South Church in that place.

**Page 119.** *Litera scripta manet:* The written letter remains.

**Page 120.** *Philosophical Society:* The object of it was to encourage "all philosophical experiments that let light into the nature of things, tend to increase the power of man over matter, and multiply the convenience or pleasures of life."

*Quaker Assembly:* the policy adopted by the Friends, or Quakers, who first settled Pennsylvania, was one of peace toward all men. That policy was successful for upward of seventy years, and could it have been adopted by the whole body of colonists in America there would perhaps have been no occasion for the passage of "a militia law." But the French not only laid claim to an immense territory west of the Alleghanies, but built forts in that region to exclude the English emigrants who had begun to settle there. This led to a war in which the French employed great numbers of Indians, who committed the most frightful atrocities. Though the Friends were still a majority in the Pennsylvania Assembly, they found eventually that they must either fight or be exterminated. They wisely chose the former alternative and voted money for the defense of the colony, as Franklin had long foreseen they inevitably must.

**Page 121.** *Lottery:* Lotteries were then a common method of raising money for almost all public purposes. Churches were built and schools endowed in this way.

**Page 122.** *Merlons:* here, the walls or ramparts.

*Bumpers:* glasses filled to the brim.

*Eighteen-pounders:* cannon carrying eighteen-pound balls.

**Page 123.** *Reprisals:* retaliation.

**Page 124.** *Sixty pounds:* if currency, about $225.

**Page 126.** *Piqued:* provoked.

**Page 127.** *Dunkers* (or Tunkers): a sect of Baptists who baptize converts by plunging, from which practice they derive their name—*tunken* (German) meaning "to plunge."

**Page 129.** *Open stove:* The great objection to the common open fireplace, generally in use until Franklin's invention, was its wastefulness of heat, most of it going up the chimney; and next, the fact that, as he said, whoever sat by it was "scorched before" and "froze behind." Franklin's stove had a double back so arranged that much heat was saved, while it had all the advantages of an open fire. Our best modern open stoves and grates are based on the Franklin principle.

**Page 130.** *Quotas:* portions or installments.

*Five thousand pounds:* if currency, about $18,750.

**Page 131.** *Moravian:* a member of an evangelical Protestant sect, which originated in Bohemia and Moravia. Franklin has more to say about them later on.

**Page 135.** *Burgess:* here, a member of the legislature.

*Magic squares or circles:* a series of numbers arranged in columns in a square, and so disposed that the sums of each row taken in any direction are equal. The circles were arranged on a similar plan, but with the numbers disposed in circles one within the other.

**Page 138.** *Two thousand pounds:* if currency, about $6,660.

**Page 140.** *Scavengers:* street-cleaners.

**Page 142.** *Vauxhall:* pleasure gardens in London which were brilliantly lighted, and densely thronged at night. They no longer exist.

**Page 143.** *Craven-street:* a short street leading out of the Strand, London; here at No. 27, Franklin had apartments for many years.

**Page 144.** *Kennel:* gutter.

*Westminster:* the district which contains Westminster Abbey. It was formerly a city in itself, but is now part of London.

**Page 145.** *Sliders:* runners, sleds.

**Page 146.** *Comptroller:* superintendent.

**Page 147.** *Pounds:* Here, and in the case following, the pound sterling, or $5.00, is probably meant.

*Ministers:* the English political ministers, or cabinet.

*Farthing:* the smallest English coin, about half a cent.

*Congress:* This was the fourth colonial convention, or congress, held at Albany with reference to the French and Indian wars.

*Lords of Trade:* A commission or Board of Trade was organized in the seventeenth century to have the care of the American colonies, and "to put things into a form and order of government that should always preserve these countries in obedience to the crown." The members of the Board were later styled the Lords Commissioners for Trade and Plantations [colonies]. To this Board the colonial governors made their reports, and sent the accounts of the collector of customs, etc. It was at the instigation of this Board that an attempt was made in 1749 to overrule all the colonial charters and make the orders of the king supreme in America.

*Six Nations:* a confederacy of six prominent Indian tribes formed in 1714.

**Page 149.** *Prerogative:* here, royal power.

*Too much of the democratic:* The plan conceded too much power to the people; reflecting men in England even then "dreaded American union as the keystone of independence."—Thomas Hutchinson's *History of the Colony of Massachusetts Bay*, Vol. III, p. 23

*My plan:* See Sparks's *Works of Franklin*, Vol. III, pp. 22–55.

**Page 150.** *Sophister:* a plausible but fallacious reasoner; a quibbling disputant.

**Page 151.** *Drafts:* that is, the outlines of forms of the answer made by the Assembly.

*Sancho Panza:* the squire or attendant of Don Quixote in the famous novel by Cervantes.

**Page 152.** *Proprietor:* See note, p. 47.

*Deputies:* See note, p. 47.

*War . . . with France:* As early as 1754 the French in America, who were then upwards of one hundred thousand strong, showed that they intended seizing the valley of the Ohio and the region around its headwaters. This led to an attempt on the part of the English colonists under Washington to check them, but it was unsuccessful. Great Britain sent over General Braddock, in 1755, to aid the colonists, but war was not formally declared until 1756.

*Crown Point:* a cape on the western side of Lake Champlain. It had been quite an important trading station between the English and Indians until 1731, when the French took possession of it, and built a

fort there. Attempts were made to dislodge the French in 1755 and 1756, but it was not until 1759 that this was accomplished.

**Page 153.** *Loan Office:* an office opened by the colony to receive loans from the inhabitants in aid of the government.

*Excise:* custom duties.

**Page 154.** *Carriages:* here, wagons.

**Page 155.** *The ministers:* the English government.

*Rendezvous:* gather.

**Page 156.** *Per diem:* per day.

*Indifferent:* disinterested or impartial.

*Carriages:* here, again, wagons.

**Page 158.** *St. Clair:* English pronunciation, *sĭn'klâr.*

*Hussar:* here, a cavalry officer.

**Page 159.** *Carrying horses:* pack-horses.

*Subalterns:* subordinate officers.

**Page 160.** *Validity:* strength or power.

**Page 161.** *Fort Duquesne* (dü'kān'): built by the French where Pittsburgh is now. The French also had a fort at Niagara, and one at Frontenac, on the Canadian side of Lake Ontario, near the east end.

**Page 163.** *This whole transaction:* This account should be compared with that given in Fiske's *Washington and his Country.*

*Aids-de-camp* (ādz'dē-kămp'): a general's staff of assistants.

**Page 164.** *David Hume:* the eminent English historian and philosopher.

*Bought servants:* See note on "Purchased," p. 59.

**Page 167.** *Militia:* Franklin was the originator of the first permanent military organization in the colonies, and also, we have seen, the one who established the first police force and fire company.

*Gnadenhut:* gnā'den-hŭt.

**Page 168.** *Stockade:* a barrier or fortification, consisting of the trunks of trees or large pieces of timber placed upright in the ground.

*Relieved:* changed the military watch or guard.

*Minisink:* probably the falls of that name on Stony Creek.

**Page 169.** *Killed ten of them:* The cruelties perpetrated by the Indians at this time caused an offer of $40 for every Indian scalp.

*Priming:* Flint-lock guns were the only ones then in use and were primed with powder which a spark from the flint ignited.

*Palisades:* strong stakes.

**Page 170.** *Perch:* the pole uniting "the fore and hind wheels."

*Swivel gun:* a small cannon mounted on a swivel, or pin, so that it can be turned in any direction.

**Page 172.** *For a common stock:* that is, they put all their earnings into a common fund.

**Page 173.** *Hautboys* (hō'boys): Hautboy is an archaic name for the aloe.

**Page 174.** *Ensigns:* color-bearers.

*Field-pieces:* cannon mounted on wheels.

**Page 175.** *Bills:* proposed laws.

**Page 178.** *Connoisseurs:* experts or judges of any art or science.

*Gentleman's Magazine:* a periodical founded in 1731 and published until 1907.

*Copy-money:* money paid to the author.

*M.:* an abbreviation of Monsieur, the equivalent of Mr.

*Dalibard:* dah'lĕ-bar'.

*Abbé* (abbay): a title formerly given to all Frenchmen who studied theology. Many abbés were tutors, professors in the universities, and men of letters.

**Page 179.** *Sect:* here, school or party.

**Page 182.** *Speech:* See this speech in Sparks's *Works of Franklin*, Vol. V., p. 499.

**Page 184.** *Deputies:* See note, p. 47.

*Agent:* The colonies had already found it to their interest to send over agents to England to represent them, and act in their behalf; but Franklin's mission was, as Mr. Weld says, more comprehensive than any preceding one.

*Packet:* a vessel employed by government to carry letters, or one sailing at regular periods, and carrying passengers and mail.

**Page 185.** *Minutes:* notes or memoranda.

**Page 187.** *Mr. Pitt:* William Pitt. He became prime minister of England in 1756, and later was created Earl of Chatham. He was illustrious both as a statesman and as an orator, and during the Revolution showed himself a warm friend to America.

**Page 188.** *Louisburg:* a seaport of Cape Breton, Nova Scotia, fortified by the French, who called it the Gibraltar of North America, but temporarily taken by the colonists under the lead of Massachusetts in 1745, and permanently occupied by the English in 1758.

**Page 189.** *Embargo:* a government order prohibiting the sailing of vessels from ports.

*Worm:* in warm latitudes ships whose bottoms are not protected by copper sheathing are liable to be attacked by a marine worm which often does great damage.

**Page 190.** *Voucher:* a document, paper, or book, which serves to vouch or attest the truth of accounts. An account of the payment of a sum of money would be proved by producing the receipt as a voucher.

**Page 191.** *Ensign staff:* flagstaff.

*Log-line:* the cord attached to the log, a triangular piece of wood thrown into the water in order to measure a vessel's rate of speed.

**Page 192.** *Watches:* The watch is that part of a vessel's officers and crew who together attend to the working of a ship for an allotted time, usually four hours.

*Chased:* chased by French men-of-war.

*Had soundings:* that is, could touch bottom with lead and line, and thus learn that land was near.

*We had a good observation:* that is, found our position by observing the sun's altitude with a quadrant.

**Page 193.** *Privateers:* armed private vessels, here referring to the French cruisers.

*Yaw:* a deviation of a ship from her course.

*Wear:* to put a ship on another tack by turning her round.

*Lighthouses:* In a letter to his wife, Franklin says, speaking of his escape from shipwreck, that had his faith been different he might have vowed to build a chapel to some saint in gratitude for his deliverance; but that as it was, if he vowed at all it would be to build a *lighthouse.*

**Page 194.** *Play-house:* theater.

*Stonehenge:* a famous ruin near Salisbury, England. It consists of a number of immense stones, arranged in two circles, an outer and an inner, with flat pieces partly connecting them at the top. Most authorities believe it to be the remains of a temple built by the early Britons before the beginning of the Christian Era.

*Wilton:* a small town a few miles from Salisbury. Wilton House, the seat of the Earl of Pembroke, is noted for its superb collection of Greek and Roman sculptures and its collection of paintings by eminent masters.

**Page 195.** *As soon . . . settled:* What follows was written the

last year of Dr. Franklin's life, and was first printed in English by the Honorable John Bigelow.

**Page 198.** *Viva voce:* by word of mouth, orally.

*Printed:* This was paper money issued by the colony of Pennsylvania and based on the taxation of land.

**Page 199.** *The General:* probably the Attorney-General of Great Britain.

**Page 200.** *Continuation:* Franklin practically ends his account of his life in 1757. The continuation of his biography, from this point until his death in 1790, is based on his writings and on the histories of the period.

*Petition . . . taxed:* This was the chief grievance, though by no means the only one.

*Greater part . . . United States:* The French called this region Louisiana in honor of Louis XIV of France. In 1762 they ceded all that portion of it which lay west of the Mississippi, together with New Orleans, to Spain. Thenceforth the name Louisiana was confined to that section of country—it extended northward from the Gulf of Mexico to the Lake of the Woods in British America, and thence west to the Pacific. Later, Spain ceded this territory back to France; and France sold it in 1803 to the United States.

*Chain . . . forts:* This line of forts may be traced today by the cities of Quebec, Montreal, Ogdensburgh, Detroit, Toledo, Fort Wayne, Vincennes, Natchez, and New Orleans.

**Page 201.** *English-speaking race . . . continent:* John and Sebastian Cabot, mariners of Bristol, England, the latter being, as it is believed, a native of that city, first discovered the mainland of North America in 1497—a year before Columbus landed on the South American continent, though he had visited the West Indies in 1492.

*Permanently settled:* Though both the French and the Spanish had made earlier settlements than the English, their colonies eventually passed into English or American control.

*Vast tracts:* The whole state of Pennsylvania with a large extent of adjacent territory was granted to William Penn and his heirs in 1681, with the proviso that he purchase the land from the Indians. Franklin (*Historical Review of Pennsylvania*) values the proprietary lands at £10,000,000, of which he supposes £1,000,000 to be productive property.

**Page 202.** *As the Assembly declared . . . protection:* Report of

the committee of the Assembly by Benjamin Franklin (Gordon's *History of Pennsylvania*).

The sayings of "Poor Richard" had been republished in England and also translated into French. They were very popular with the people of both countries long before Franklin went abroad in 1757.

**Page 203.** *Busy with pen:* It was during this time that he published his pamphlet on the interest of Great Britain in retaining Canada and the volume entitled *An Historical Review of Pennsylvania*, though he did not himself write, but contributed the material of the latter work.

*That degree:* The degree of J. C. D., Doctor of Civil Law.

*The following parable:* The parable was not original with Franklin and was never claimed by him as such. The parable as given here is as Lord Kames published it. The original, as repeated by Franklin, had four more verses; but they rather detract from its power and his lordship wisely omitted them.

**Page 207.** *Getting the law confirmed:* The law, as confirmed, exempted the unsurveyed wild lands of the proprietaries from taxation and provided that their surveyed lands should be assessed at as low a rate as that of similar property held by the colonists.

**Page 208.** *Plowman:* Long before, Franklin had made "Poor Richard" say, "A plowman on his legs is higher than a gentleman on his knees."

*The man . . . independent:* From *Œuvres de Cabanis* (Vol. V, p. 223), quoted by Bigelow.

**Page 209.** *The postman:* For further information on the post office and postal service of that day, see McMaster's *Brief History of the United States.*

**Page 211.** *Matchcoat:* a loose woolen coat made of coarse stuff called matchcloth.

**Page 214.** *The petition:* This petition did not propose depriving the proprietaries of their governing power without making them equitable compensation for the change. Two agents were chosen by the colony, Franklin and Norris, to present this petition, but the mission finally devolved on Franklin alone.

**Page 216.** *Commercial prosperity of Great Britain:* Adam Smith, the Scotch philosopher and political economist, was one of the few clear-headed men of that day who, with Franklin, severely condemned

the folly of Great Britain in this respect. In his *Wealth of Nations*, published the same year that American independence was declared, Smith said: "To found a great empire [America] for the sole purpose of raising up a people of customers, may at first sight appear a project fit only for a nation of shopkeepers. It is, however, a project . . . extremely fit for a nation whose government is influenced by shopkeepers. . . . England purchased for some of her subjects, who found themselves uneasy at home, a great estate in a distant country. . . . They [the shopkeepers] petitioned the Parliament that the cultivators of America might for the future be confined to their shop; first, for buying all the goods which they wanted, from Europe; and secondly, for selling all such parts of their own produce as those traders might find it convenient to buy." See *Wealth of Nations* (Vol. II, Book IV, Part III, chap. vii), and compare Franklin's *Causes of the American Discontents before 1768*.

**Page 219.** *What is your name:* Only a small number of these questions are given here. For a full report of the examination see Bigelow's *Franklin*.

*What was the temper . . . 1763:* In the year 1733 (reënacted in 1763), "for the welfare and prosperity of our sugar colonies in America," and "for remedying discouragements of planters," duties were "*given and granted*" to George the Second upon all rum, spirits, molasses, syrups, sugar, and paneles of foreign growth, produce, and manufacture, imported into the colonies.—Bigelow's *Franklin*

**Page 223.** *Bag-wig:* a wig in which the back hair was inclosed in an ornamented bag. In the eighteenth century it was the fashion for gentlemen to wear wigs.

**Page 224.** *Your remotest provinces:* that is, to America.

*He then goes on:* For the whole of the "Rules" see Bigelow's edition of *Franklin's Works*.

**Page 226.** *A man of three letters:* FUR, the Latin for "thief."

**Page 227.** *Loans:* money borrowed by the king without security or interest, and paid, if at all, at his royal convenience.

*Benevolences:* extorted loans or gifts.

*Ship-money:* an illegal tax levied by Charles I on pretense that it was necessary to build a navy. The money was, however, used for a wholly different purpose.

**Page 228.** *"Gen. Gage's troops . . . them":* To the credit of the

English friends of America it should be said that after the attack of the British on Lexington and Concord, they raised a purse of $500, which they sent to Dr. Franklin to distribute among the American wounded and the wives and mothers of the killed.

**Page 229.** *Mr. Strahan:* The bark of this famous letter was much worse than its bite, for it did not interrupt the friendship of Franklin and Strahan. See facsimile opposite page 230.

**Page 230.** *Vergennes:* vĕr zhĕn′.

**Page 232.** *Perilous voyage:* Horace Walpole said that Franklin took the voyage "at the risk of his head."

**Page 233.** *Letters of introduction:* For cases of this kind and where it was absolutely *impossible* to refuse, Dr. Franklin drew up the following as a model for such letters of recommendation, and actually employed it in some instances, to shame the persons making such indiscreet applications; and to endeavor, in some measure, to put a stop to them.—W. T. F.

*Model of a Letter of Recommendation of a person you are unacquainted with.*

PARIS, 2 April, 1777.

SIR: The bearer of this, who is going to America, presses me to give him a letter of recommendation, though I know nothing of him, not even his name. This may seem extraordinary, but I assure you it is not uncommon here. Sometimes, indeed, one unknown person brings another equally unknown, to recommend him; and sometimes they recommend one another! As to this gentleman, I must refer you to himself for his character and merits, with which he is certainly better acquainted than I can possibly be. I recommend him, however, to those civilities, which every stranger, of whom one knows no harm, has a right to; and I request you will do him all the good offices, and show him all the favor, that, on further acquaintance, you shall find him to deserve. I have the honor to be, etc.

**Page 237.** *Lev'ees:* royal receptions.

**Page 238.** *Apples of King John:* probably magic apples, like those of the Arabian Nights, which grant the eater health and good fortune.

**Page 239.** *Dialogue between Franklin and the Gout:* "A petition of the Left Hand" and "The Ephemera" should also be read. See Bigelow's edition of *Franklin's Works.*

*Com'plaisant'*: obliging, civil.

**Page 240.** *Truce:* cessation.

**Page 243.** *A final treaty:* A preliminary treaty had been signed, without the knowledge of France, in 1782. Franklin admitted that this was an irregularity, but asserted that the provisional treaty was conditioned on its final acceptance by France. A reduced copy of the signature of the English and American commissioners to the final treaty (with their respective seals) is shown opposite page 244.

**Page 246.** *An eminent statesman:* John Jay.

**Page 247.** *How has it happened . . . aid:* Though the convention did not adopt the recommendation, yet it is probable that it had considerable effect in securing more efficient and united action, and hence was not wholly lost.

**Page 248.** *One . . . union:* The opening paragraph of the Constitution clearly sets forth the purpose for which it was framed:

> We, the People of the United States, in order to form a *more perfect* union, establish justice, insure domestic tranquillity, provide for the common defense, promote the general welfare, and secure the blessings of liberty to ourselves and our posterity, do ordain and establish this CONSTITUTION for the United States of America.

*The following speech:* For the whole speech see Bigelow's edition of *Franklin's Works.*

**Page 249.** *A rising . . . sun:* The same year in which the convention framed the Constitution, the copper coin commonly called the Franklin penny was issued. It had upon its face a sun rising above a sundial, and beneath, the words MIND YOUR BUSINESS. On the other side was an endless chain of thirteen links, and in the center, WE ARE ONE.

*An eminent English historian:* Edward Freeman in *The History of Federal Government.*

*A boat moved by a steam-engine:* This was John Fitch's steamboat, the first ever launched in America. Poor Fitch struggled hard to make it a success, but failed to get sufficient money to carry out his plans. He became utterly disheartened at last, and in 1798 committed suicide. In his journal he had written: "The day will come when *some more powerful man* will get fame and riches from *my* invention." Not long after, Fulton accomplished what Fitch had begun.

**Page 252.** *Turgot* (tür'gō'): "*Eripuit cælo fulmen sceptrumque tyrannis.*"

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